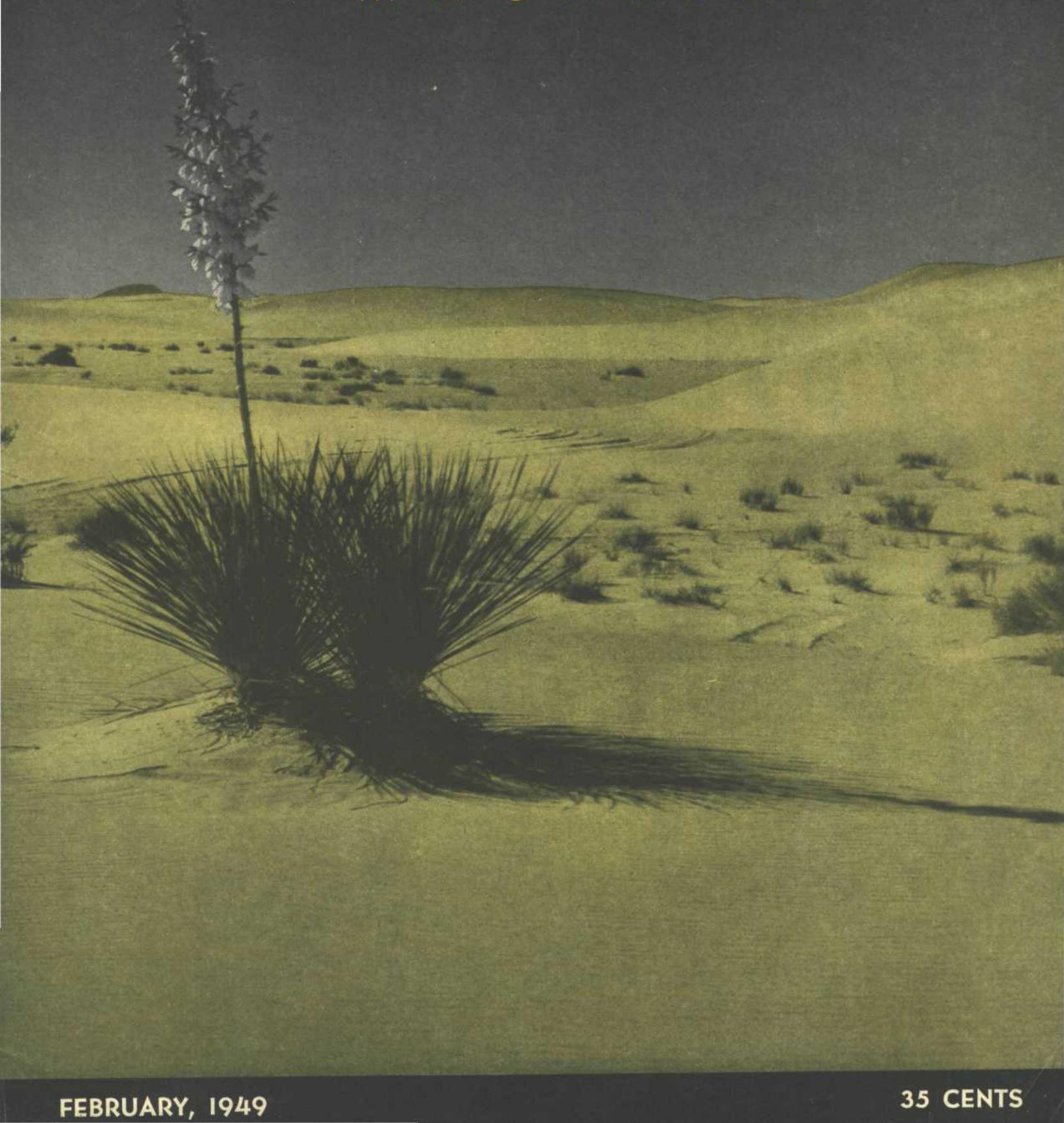


THE

Desert

MAGAZINE



FEBRUARY, 1949

35 CENTS



WILDFLOWERS ARE NOW IN BLOSSOM ALONG THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO

Palm Desert

In California's most picturesque desert setting—a lovely cove at the base of the Santa Rosa Mountains.

- Although this new desert community was opened to home and business investors less than three years ago, \$1,100,000 worth of lots already have been sold. Private construction totalling \$1,250,000 is now completed or in progress, including a \$200,000 school.
- Here on a gently sloping bajada overlooking the date gardens of the famous Coachella valley is the spacious building site for the desert home you have long dreamed of owning.
- Here the winter days are clear and sunny, the air is crisp and clean and invigorating. On the sands of this lovely desert cove millions of tiny wild-flower plants are growing, and already in mid-winter great beds of purple desert verbena are in blossom.
- Here you can get away from the crowded traffic and the smog of the congested coastal areas and really live—and here also many business opportunities await those who want to pioneer in a new community.

Two New Residential Units in Palm Desert Are Now
Being Opened Where on Generous Terms You May
Buy . . . Spacious Homesite Lots as Low as

\$950

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Tract Office on Property or See Your Broker

Edith Ward, Tract Agent



DESERT CALENDAR

Jan. 28-29—Thunderbird Ski Carnival, Arizona Sno-Bowl, Flagstaff, Arizona.

Jan. 29—Searles Lake Gem and Mineral society's Ninth Annual '49er party, parade, dancing, entertainment. Trona club, Trona, California.

Jan. 29-30—Annual Palo Verde Valley rodeo, Blythe, California.

Feb. 2—Candlemas day, dance, San Felipe pueblo, New Mexico.

Feb. 4-5—Second annual Arizona State Square Dance festival, Shrine auditorium, Phoenix, Arizona.

Feb. 5-6—Palm Springs rodeo, Palm Springs, California.

Feb. 6—Eccles ski cup race, giant slalom, Snow Basin, Ogden, Utah.

Feb. 6—Lecture on Seri Indians of Tiburon island, by William Neil Smith, Southwest Museum, Highland Park, Los Angeles.

Feb. 6-13—Western Mid-Winter Trap Shoot, Jaberwock club, Reno, Nevada.

Feb. 8-9—Convention, New Mexico Wool Growers association, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Feb. 12-13—Snowshoe Thompson Memorial cross country race, White Hills, Nevada.

Feb. 12-13—Fourth Annual Silver Spur Rodeo, Yuma, Arizona.

Feb. 18-20—University of Nevada Intercollegiate Ski Carnival, Mount Rose, Reno, Nevada.

Feb. 18-22—Riverside County Fair and National Date Festival, County fair grounds, Indio, California.

Feb. 19—Annual rodeo parade, horses and horse-drawn vehicles, Tucson, Arizona.

Feb. 19-22—Annual rodeo, La Fiesta de los Vaqueros, Tucson, Arizona.

Feb. 19-22—National ski jump event, Ecker Hill, Salt Lake City.

Feb. 20—Lecture, "The Growth of the Folk Song," by Mrs. Ernest Thompson Seton, Southwest Museum, Los Angeles.

Feb. 21-26—Annual Albuquerque Market Week.

Feb. 26—Far Western Ski Association jumping championships, Lake Tahoe.

Feb. 26-27—Intermountain downhill and slalom championships, Brighton, Utah.

Feb. 27—The Jaraba dancers, Southwest Museum, Highland Park, Los Angeles.

Through February—Exhibit at the Southwest Museum, Highland Park, Los Angeles, of a collection of water colors by pupils of the United States Indian school in Santa Fe.

Mar. 4-6—Annual Desert Gem and Mineral show and field trips, sponsored by Desert Gem and Mineral society of Blythe, California.



Volume 12

FEBRUARY, 1949

Number 4

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RANDALL HENDERSON, Editor

BESS STACY Business Manager

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Address Correspondence to Desert Magazine, Palm Desert, California



During Date Festival week Indio folks wear the garb of their desert cousins in Asia and North Africa—the original home of the date. Bachian camels are brought in to give color to the program.

COACHELLANS PREPARE FOR ANNUAL DATE HARVEST

California's desert people will be the hosts in February at the one and only Date Festival held annually in the United States. Staged in a setting of oriental architecture and costuming the five-day program attracts visitors from all over the West.

While a wide variety of carnival events and an Arabian Nights pageant each evening provide entertainment for the crowds, the unique feature of the program is the agricultural exhibit in which dates grown in Coachella valley gardens are the center of interest.

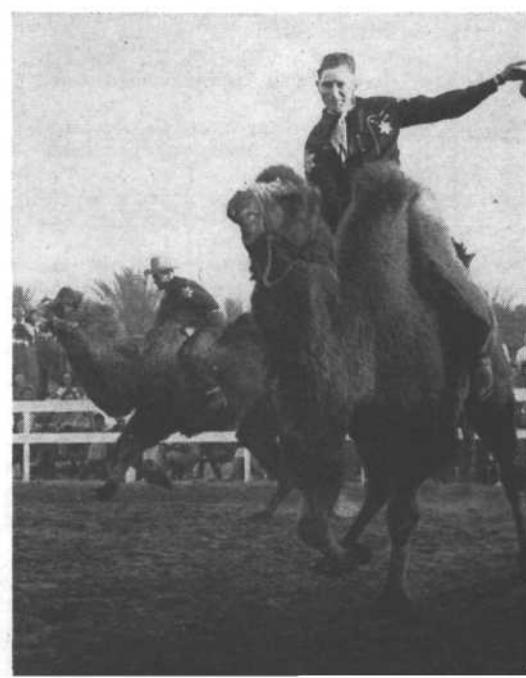


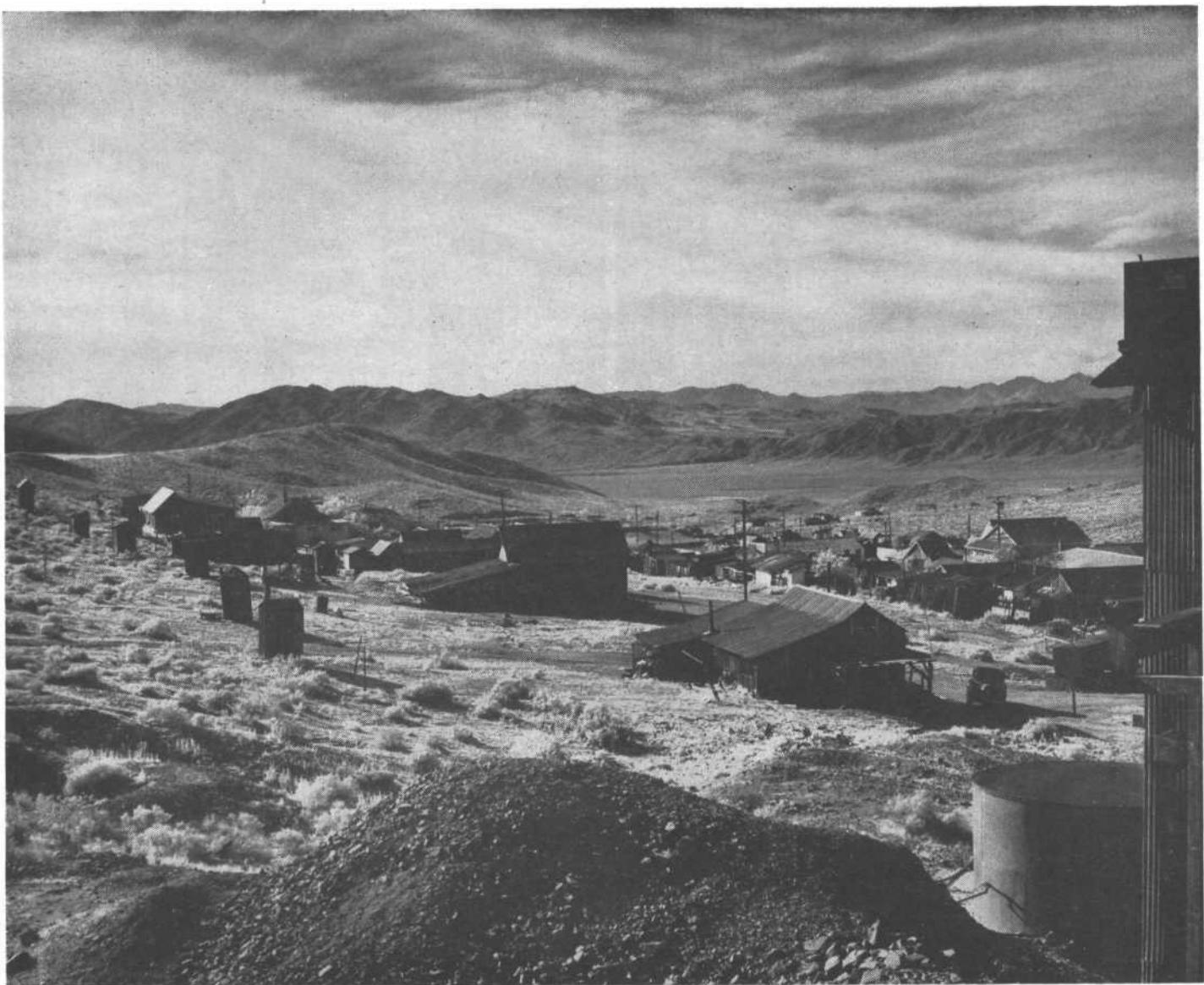
This year's dates for California's Date Festival at Indio are—

February 18-19-20-21-22

More than 200 local people in costume take part in the Arabian Nights pageant staged each evening on a gorgeous oriental stage.

Camel races are the highlights of an afternoon program which includes horse show, queen contest, Bagdad bazaar, slave market and carnival events.





Dry desert winds have aged yet preserved the unchanging little town of Randsburg, with its musty air of hopeful expectation.

Photographs and Text by
DON AND BARBARA OLLIS

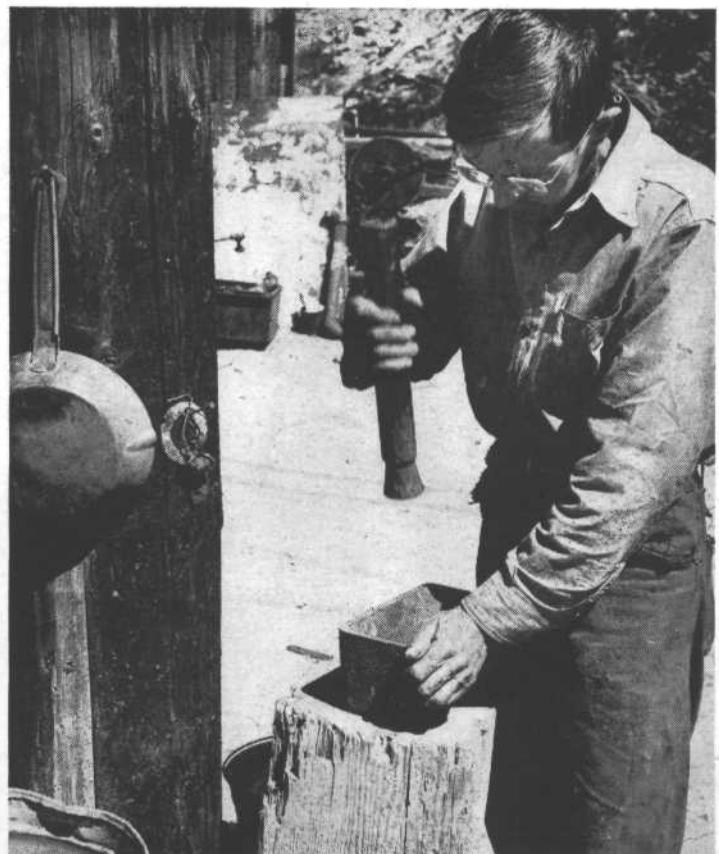
Tucked away in arid desert foothills 42 miles northeast of Mojave, Randsburg is one of the West's few remaining typical mining towns that retain both the body and spirit of frontier days. Just far enough from U. S. Highway 395 to escape the tourist-trade jumble of gas stations, cafes and honkytonks, the mining town has been threatened repeatedly with becoming a ghost town. But it waits with knowing patience for the inevitable return of depression's gold seekers.

Randsburg Refuses to Become a Ghost Town

DUSTY, rutted streets wind past rickety unpainted miner's shacks, and warped false-fronted stores that still bear the faintly discernible signs, "Assay Office" or "State Militia." Deserted claims with their clay-colored mine-tailings dot the rocky slopes. Tottering galvanized sheds, heavy-timbered gallows frames and rusting machinery lie in desolate abandon. The warm reds, old browns,

and weathered yellows of the frame buildings blend into the sand, clay, and scoria hills as if in protective coloration against the onslaught of the desert. The total lack of greenery or cultivation of any sort, and the soldierly procession of outhouses bespeak the preciousness of Randsburg water.

Tucked away in the arid desert foothills 42 miles northeast of Mojave Randsburg is just far enough from



Prospectors still use cast iron mortar and pestle (right) to crush their ore samples and test them by the ancient method of hand panning (left).

U. S. Highway 395 to escape the tourist-trade jumble of gas stations, cafes and honkytonks.

It is one of the West's few remaining typical frontier mining towns that retain both the body and spirit of the Forty-niners. Repeatedly threatened with becoming a ghost town, it waits with knowing patience for the inevitable return of depression's gold seekers.

True to its namesake in Transvaal, South Africa, this little desert mining town owes its past and hinges its future to the magic cry of "Gold!" Eras of prosperity and depression come and go, but vivid legends of miraculous discoveries of the great mines of the past and present keep prospectors active in the dark, looming Rand mountains.

In 1895 Randsburg was a roaring mining camp famous for its richest strike, the Yellow Aster Mine. Until 1942, this mine poured \$16,000,000 into the pans of its owners. Tungsten found in the same ore paid the operation expenses, leaving the gold as clear profit. This old glory hole above the rusty iron sheds and weathered shacks is a constant reminder of the gold that may still lie in those hills.

After the turn of the century, the 100-stamp mill of the Yellow Aster continued to pound out the gold. But

the surrounding claims brought no vast riches. The old miners sought greener fields—the young miners went to war. The mining camp slowed down. Word passed around that the hills were worked out, and Randsburg's population dwindled.

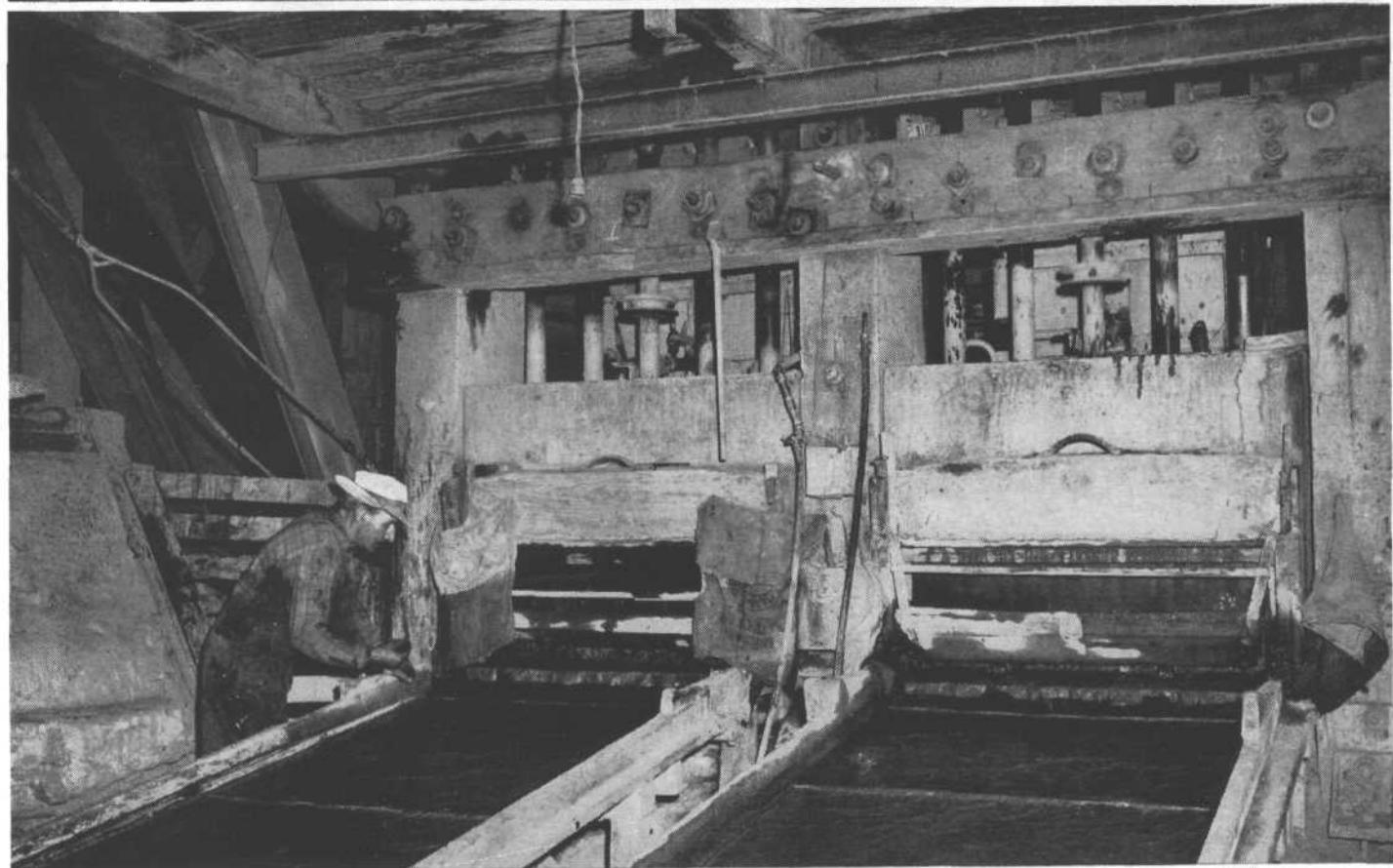
After World War I accidental discovery of the fabulous Kelly Silver mine in the middle of the district again brought an eager horde of miners, speculators, tinhorns, prospectors, and fortune hunters. With \$100 a ton ore, for a brief period the Kelly was said to be the biggest silver mine in the world. The surrounding hills were honeycombed with shafts and humped with mine-tailings as if infested with gophers. A few struck good ore, but nothing like the Kelly bonanza. As time wore on, the other veins dwindled, meager savings or patience ran out, and the itinerant populace moved on.

Then in 1929 there began a new exodus to the desert. Carpenters, salesmen, cooks and even artists, thrown out of employment in the cities where depressions always cause the greatest hardship, came to the desert country hoping to mine enough gold for their subsistence. Greenhorns though they were, they were willing to learn and work their way in the mines until they could prospect for themselves. Under

the spell of gold the hills were overrun with new mine hands hopefully prospecting in their spare hours. Again a lucky number came up. This time the Golden Queen mine near Mojave poured forth riches from the desert.

The next mining camp exodus was more sudden, more complete than the others. For L-208, the government mine-closing order of November, 1942, shut down gold mining operations for wartime conservation of manpower. Sand, sage, and creosote infiltrated the near-ghost town of Randsburg as gas rationing eliminated even the casual tourist. Only the Butte Lode mine continued to ship gold to the U. S. Treasury. Its sole legal reason for operating was that it supplied the town with a meager water supply. Seemingly the desert would claim its ghost town; but even stripped of its main source of income, Randsburg managed to survive the war years.

In today's inflation period, only gold retains its depression value of \$35.00 an ounce. Production costs have doubled. Big mines such as the Yellow Aster cannot afford to operate. But gradually the smaller mines are being reopened and a few new claims are being worked. The hopeful roar of one stamp mill echoes in the hills above the town that once thundered



Above: The sagging engine shed of this typical deserted mine on Randsburg's main street would have collapsed long ago if it were not supported by the cable from its winch to the gallows frame. Below: But some mills still operate at their complicated chemical processes of separating the values from the waste rock.

with the sound of crushing ore. At present, the owners of this one mill are satisfied if they meet expenses on their mine. They consider it cheaper than closing down, and fighting decay, rust, and claim jumpers, and better than selling out at a loss.

A few die-hard old timers have seen the town through its cycles of depression and prosperity. They have followed the elusive golden veins until they ended abruptly in a fault or gradually dimmed and flickered out. They have watched a shaft, abandoned when patience gave way, ironically produce gold a few feet farther on under the pick of a new claimant.

Bert Wegman, born and raised in the Mojave mining region, exemplifies its dogged spirit in his philosophy. "Some gold takes skill to find—that's what makes it the world's medium of exchange. Some gold just takes a big enough toe to stumble on it—that's



The five stamps of this rusting old mill (left) may never crush ore again. But miners like V. T. Bowald (above) who found his favorite French briar pipe in a mine that had been closed off for 40 years, confidently await Randsburg's next boom.

what keeps you looking for it. And some just takes a lucky number—that's why so many of us never strike it. God Almighty put it there good so's it couldn't all be taken out in one generation."

Randsburg is abiding its time. When costs go down, the mines will resume operation. If a depression comes, again men will be forced to look farther and harder for a livelihood. The hidden riches in the desert hills will again lure the tradesman and the businessman in search of a living—in hope of sudden wealth. And Randsburg will be waiting for them.

the "pot hole" placers



"Then he waded into the water and scooped up a handful of the yellow stuff."

By JOHN D. MITCHELL

BUFFALO hunters, trappers, scouts and other frontiersmen always kept a sharp lookout for rich gold deposits on their forays across the great plains and into the mountains of the west.

Early day buffalo hunters and trappers on their way from Deadwood, South Dakota, to Montana, Idaho, Utah and the Spanish settlements on the Pacific Coast reported that the Snake Indians of Utah were bartering gold nuggets for supplies, but had refused to disclose the source of their wealth, even to white men who were on friendly terms.

Letters of these early day trappers and hunters to friends in the east reported that the Snake Indians often were seen with buckskin pokes filled with large gold nuggets said to have

If there is any basis of truth in this lost gold legend, somewhere in eastern Utah there is a great bed of gravel conglomerate studded with nuggets of gold. Indian women once knew its location, and more recently it was discovered by a tenderfoot college graduate who took out a \$100,000 fortune in a few months. But if such a placer deposit actually exists, its location is as baffling as that of Pegleg Smith's gold-studded hill.

been washed from the sands and gravels in a secret location by Indian women.

Many years later, Frank Lane, a graduate just out of Yale Law school, saw one of these letters from a trapper in the West, and decided to do

Art by JERRY FIKE O'HARA

some prospecting in the Snake country before settling down to engage in practice.

Lane chose for his partner another college graduate, who for the purpose of this story, we will call John Howard. Together the two men set forth with fresh hearts and high hopes to search for the golden mirage that lay beyond the snow-capped Rocky mountains.

For many months the young eastern college men prospected in the Colorado Rockies and thoroughly enjoyed their association with trappers, buffalo hunters, scouts and prospectors. Day after day, month after month they combed the rugged mountains in search of pay ore, but beyond the discovery of a few low-grade gold quartz ledges, they had little success.

Finally the near approach of winter drove them down through the sunset

canyons and mountain gorges and out onto the plains of eastern Utah on the border of the Snake Indian country where they established a permanent camp and prospected for gold during the months that followed.

Here the inexperienced prospectors had no better success than in the mountains of Colorado and Lane became discouraged. As spring approached he grew more restless and spent most of his time around camp.

Finally the two tenderfeet moved their camp farther out on the plains and after several days journey halted

their pack mules one night at the base of a low-lying granite mountain where they pitched their tent for the night. The iron-stained mesas around the great uplift were full of pot holes. A heavy rain had fallen and the holes stood full of water. The desert was covered with green grass, making it an ideal camp for both men and beasts.

Howard was pleased with the country and had a hunch that they were going to find the elusive pot of gold for which they had been searching.

But Lane grew more restless and

decided to turn the outfit over to his partner and return east to take up the practice of law in Boston.

Howard became the sole owner of the outfit free to live the life he had grown to love. After the departure of his friend he mounted his saddle mule and rode out for a short hunting trip on the surrounding plains.

He bagged an antelope and on his way back to camp stopped at one of the pot holes to get a drink for himself and water his mule. The noonday sun was shining directly into the hole and as he stopped to drink he saw some shining pieces of ore at the bottom of the shallow cavity.

Then he waded into the water and scooped up a handful of the yellow stuff. He knew at once he had found the bonanza for which he and his partner had been searching.

He put the nuggets in his pocket and went to camp. After a hurried meal he returned to the pot hole with a gold pan and worked all afternoon scooping the gravel from the bottom of the hole and panning out the nuggets. As the sun disappeared in a blaze of fire behind the ragged edge of the western world that lay far across the desert he made his way back to camp with an estimated \$700 worth of gold taken from the one shallow hole.

For weeks the lone prospector lived on the game that roamed the plains around his camp and panned the dirt and gravel found on the bottom of the numerous pot holes that dotted the iron-stained mesas around the great granite mountain.

When the cold winter winds again came across the plains Howard made his way to the nearest settlement with buckskin bags of gold which later proved to be worth nearly \$100,000.

He returned east with his fortune but through bad investments eventually lost much of it. Many years later he tried to return to the scene of his fabulous strike, but either failed to reach the right location or the pot holes had been worked out, for he did not find a single nugget of gold.

Old-time cowboys and sheepherders refer to a place in eastern Utah as the "pot holes" but none of them have ever been known to pick up nuggets in this region.

According to one version of the lost gold story, the pot holes described by Howard were not natural holes such as occur in sandstone formation in many parts of the west, but were excavations made in a gravel conglomerate by the Snake women to obtain the gold mentioned by the early day trappers and hunters, and that a fortune still awaits the prospector who will find that conglomerate deposit.

TRUE OR FALSE

knowledge—history, geography, botany, zoology, mineralogy, Indian life, and lore of the desert country. But you'll learn a lot even if you do not get a high score. If you get 10 correct answers you know more than many of the people who live on the desert. If you can answer 15 you are entitled to follow a burro and call yourself a Desert Rat. Above 15—well, no one but a Sand Dune Sage could do as well. The answers are on page 38.

- 1—An arrastre was a tool used by the Spaniards for hewing logs. True..... False.....
- 2—Over a long period of years the water in the Great Salt Lake gradually has been rising. True..... False.....
- 3—Brigham Young brought the first Mormon colonists to Utah after the civil war. True..... False.....
- 4—A sidewinder is seldom more than two feet long. True..... False.....
- 5—The break in the Colorado river which formed Salton Sea in 1905-06 occurred in Mexico. True..... False.....
- 6—The color of the blossom of *chuparosa* or hummingbird flower is red. True..... False.....
- 7—According to legend the fabulous Seven Cities of Cibola were located on the Mojave desert of California. True..... False.....
- 8—Panamint range is on the east side of Death Valley. True..... False.....
- 9—One of the most poisonous insects on the desert is the tarantula. True..... False.....
- 10—Prescott was the first capital of Arizona territory. True..... False.....
- 11—The land where Nogales, Arizona, is located was acquired by the United States in the Gadsden Purchase. True..... False.....
- 12—The agave or wild century plant of the Southwest generally dies after its first flowering. True..... False.....
- 13—Garnets are always red. True..... False.....
- 14—Many of the Indian cliff houses found in the Southwest are still occupied by descendants of their original builders. True..... False.....
- 15—The book, *Mesa, Canyon and Pueblo*, was written by Charles F. Lummis. True..... False.....
- 16—The tortoises found in the southwestern desert are hatched from eggs. True..... False.....
- 17—White ocotillo is common in many parts of the California desert. True..... False.....
- 18—The Saguaro cactus and the Joshua tree are never found growing together in the same locality. True..... False.....
- 19—El Tovar is the name of a famous hotel in Death Valley. True..... False.....
- 20—Bryce Canyon national park is north of the Grand Canyon national park. True..... False.....

Mystery Death in the Dunes

Buried beneath the ever-shifting sands of Algodones dunes between El Centro and Yuma there may be evidence to reveal the identity of travelers who met a tragic death there in the dim distant past—but those who would solve this mystery must await the caprice of the desert winds. Here is one of the most intriguing stories to be published by Desert Magazine in many years.

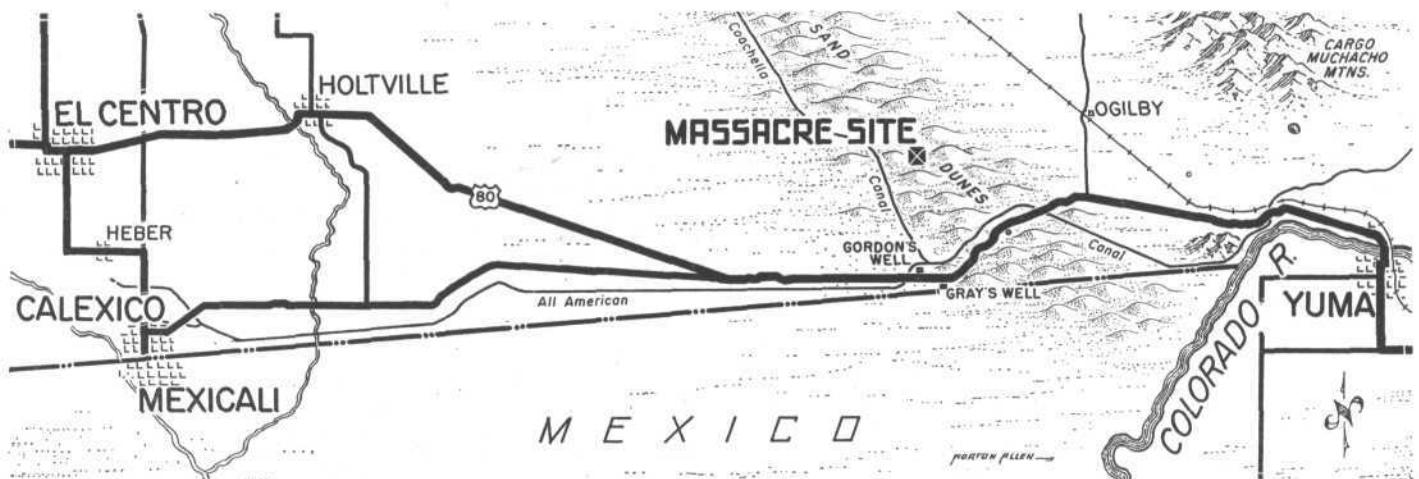
The Algodones sand dunes. This photograph discloses the shifting character of the dunes where the massacre took place. Photograph by Don Ollis, Santa Barbara, California.

By ORION M. ZINK

IT WAS an April morning in 1947, and Cleve H. Park, surveyor, and his chainman, George Seaton, were conducting surveys in the sand dunes northeast of Holtville in Imperial Valley, California.

Midday found the job only partly





completed. After lunch the men shouldered their instruments and trudged back to work.

Reaching the ground where they had left off, Seaton was directed to proceed to a sandhill about three quarters of a mile away, and Park busied himself with his transit.

Heat waves danced maddeningly across the distance between the two men, and the chainman became a grotesque blur through the glass.

Realizing the futility of trying to determine an elevation under the existing atmospheric conditions, Park shouldered his transit and headed toward his assistant.

As he made his way down the sandy slope into the valley separating the two sandhills, Park's attention was drawn to an iron rim of a wagon wheel sticking out of a pile of sand at the foot of the dune a short distance away.

A casual observer might have disregarded it completely, thinking it merely a rusted rim such as one might find lying around in an abandoned farm yard. However, Cleve Park comes from the plains of Texas. To his experienced eye the rim looked different from those he had been accustomed to seeing. It was much narrower, and evidently had been there a long time.

His efforts to dislodge it from the sand were unsuccessful, so he turned his attention to exploring the nearby terrain. He had taken only a few steps when he caught sight of a barrel of a shotgun lying near the bleached bones of a human skeleton.

Soon he came upon more bones with a badly rusted revolver nearby. Thoroughly aroused by now, Park extended his search over the entire area. He came upon more skeletons, until a total of seven were located. Near each with one exception, were the rusted remains of a revolver, shotgun or rifle.

The revolvers and shotguns were

all of the cap and ball type. The rifles were so rusted it was impossible to identify them accurately.

None of the skeletons was complete. There were parts of skulls, a jaw bone, a few teeth, or a handful of splinters lying here and there over perhaps an acre of ground.

Other articles uncovered were a powder flask, a brass bullet mold, a brass kettle, a stirrup from a side saddle, a bit of brass from a harness, a

Cleve H. Park, who came upon the scene of the massacre while surveying in the dunes.



spur and several .44 and .50 calibre bullets. Some of the bullets had mushroomed where they had spent themselves in the sand.

No animal bones were found. The stocks and handles of the guns were missing, and no spokes or any part of a wagonbed were discovered.

It was evident a terrific gun fight had taken place here in the early days, and several people had lost their lives. Who were these unfortunate victims? When did it happen? These and other questions raced through Park's mind as he pondered this tragic mystery.

So interested had Park become in his strange discoveries that Seaton had been forgotten. Then he realized that somewhere in the dunes his rodman was waiting for him. He gathered up the weapons, shouldered his transit and headed over the sandhills to where he had last seen his companion.

It turned out that Seaton had waited a long time, then becoming worried had made his way back to the work car. Here Park finally joined him displaying his relics and relating his experience. Back at his headquarters in San Diego the story eventually reached the newspapers.

It was then that the writer, having dabbled a bit in local history, became acquainted with Cleve Park and was invited to assist in an attempt to unravel the puzzle of this death battle that had occurred perhaps three quarters of a century ago.

It was a foregone conclusion that historical sources would have no record of a battle having taken place at that point. Had there been, the bodies and weapons would long since have been removed.

Apparently the party had been wiped out to the last man. But in time, California newspapers surely must have received inquiries from relatives or friends worried over their strange disappearance.

This posed the question: When had

a massacre taken place? To arrive at the approximate date, the old weapons offered the best clue. If they could be identified, and the time of their manufacture established, then the newest gun in the lot would give us the earliest date the event could have happened. There was also the remote chance that the arms manufacturer may have retained records of sales even that far back.

With that in mind, San Diego's Chief of Police, Clifford E. Peterson, was contacted. He offered the services of his laboratory. The rust encrusted firearms were turned over to his technicians, Walter R. Scott and Arthur H. Hawley.

The guns were in such bad condition it seemed a hopeless task. But after several days of soaking in rust solvent, carefully brushing and cleaning, four of the weapons were identified and serial numbers were located on three of them.

One of the revolvers was a Colt, single action, cap and ball .44 calibre and carried the number 841. It might have been any one of three models, all much alike, that were manufactured between 1847 and 1860. Of the 1860 model over 200,000 were turned out. It was the principal revolver used by the Northern forces during the Civil War.

The Colt company stated that no record had been kept of sales of these models, but the small serial number would indicate early manufacture.

The other revolver turned out to be a Remington single action, cap and ball .44 calibre, number 88943. This gun's handle was badly bent, suggesting that it might have been used as a club.

The shotguns, both double-barreled muzzle loaders, could not be identified. One however, had what is known as a "Damascus twist" barrel.

The other guns proved to be a breech loading Remington rifle of .50 calibre, and a lever action .50 calibre, seven-shot repeating Spencer rifle, number 27556. This gun was manufactured from 1862 to 1865 and next to the Springfield, was the most famous weapon used during the Civil War.

History records that the 197th Ohio regiment was armed with it, and Gen. Hooker stated in a report that several regiments in his army had asked for permission to purchase and arm them-

The remains of seven skeletons were found, with an ancient rifle, revolver or shotgun close by all but one of them. These pictures were taken by the surveyors before the relics were disturbed.



selves with this weapon. Spencers were used in great numbers in the West as late as the 80's.

The Remington people furnished the following interesting information regarding the two guns bearing their trade mark: The rifle was a carbine which was turned out from 1864 until the 80's. And the revolver was known as the New Model army type, of which many thousands were manufactured from 1863 to 1865.

Unfortunately the company maintained no record of buyers or dates of sales in the early days. The serial numbers likewise offered no clue as to exact date of manufacture.

From the foregoing data furnished by the police department, arms catalogs and the firearms companies, we concluded that the battle must have been staged not earlier than 1864 and as late as the 80's.

By this time the writer had become so intrigued with the mystery, a visit to the site became a must. When approached with the idea of revisiting the spot Park readily agreed and we began to formulate plans.

Among the things we discussed was the possibility of finding other identifying articles—perhaps a coin—a watch or a ring. Perhaps in the sand where the wheel rested, the body of the wagon might be located and no telling what additional objects might then be brought to light.

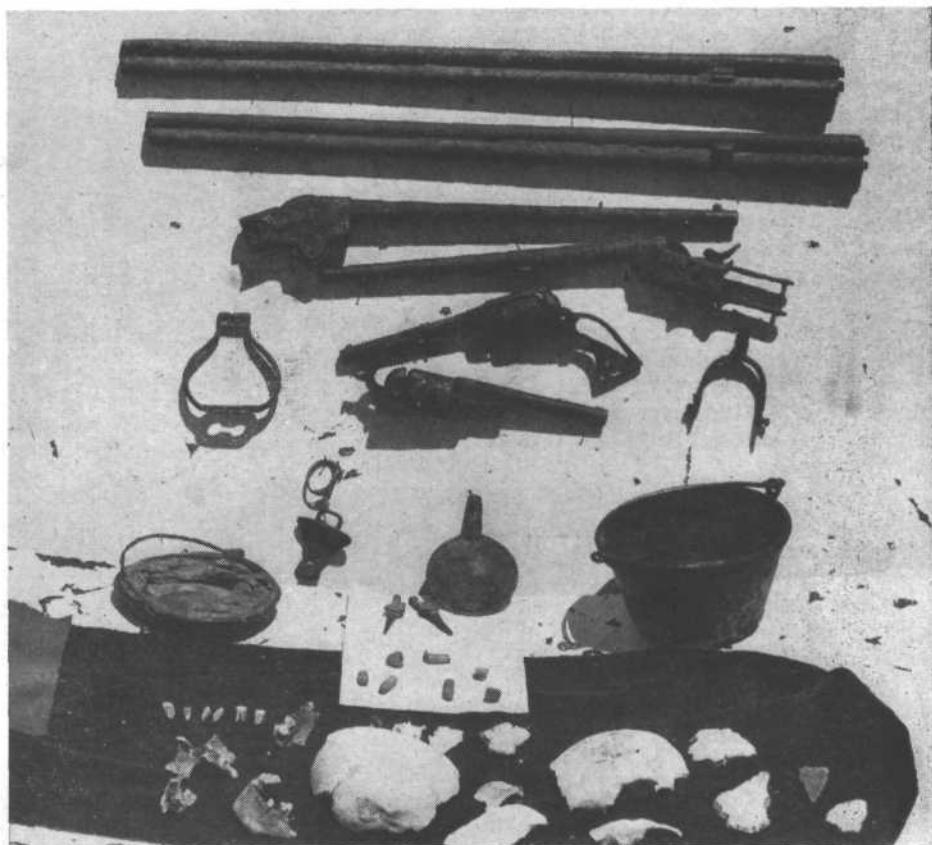
By this time it was mid-summer. Not wishing to face the extreme heat of the desert, tentative plans were drawn to make the trip in the late fall or winter. Several postponements followed, due to illness and other reasons. A year rolled around before a definite date was set.

Maps of the region, both early day and the latest, were procured. As we made last minute preparations, Walter Zurschmiede, a lover of the great outdoors and desert enthusiast, accepted an invitation to accompany us.

At sunup Saturday, June 5, the long delayed trek from San Diego to Imperial valley started. By mid-morning El Centro, then Holtville had been left behind, and we were on the long stretch headed east towards Yuma.

Half way between Gordon's Well and Gray's Well, where the Coachella canal branches from the All-American canal, we turned off Highway 80 and headed north, following the left bank of the Coachella canal about five miles, then crossed the canal and parked our car.

Cleve Park told us the battleground was about a mile north and east. The Chocolate mountains could be seen in the distance, and the great sand dunes loomed in our immediate foreground.



This is the complete collection of relics gathered by Cleve Park before the shifting sands covered the site of his discovery.

It was an ideal day for hiking, sunny, but not too warm. As Cleve led the way across the waste land, lizards ran for their holes among scattered patches of greasewood.

The big sandhill where the surveyors had begun their work was soon reached. Here we halted to get our bearings. From the crest it should be comparatively easy to locate the wagon rim, about which we planned to center our search. But—no rim was to be seen.

Definite bearings were in Park's possession, even the degrees of latitude and longitude, and he stated that the terrain generally looked unchanged.

It was only when a thorough search of the area at the foot of the great sand dune had been completed, that the disappointing truth was revealed—wind storms had covered the wheel rim with sand to a depth of several feet. We attacked likely looking places with the shovel, but it soon became apparent that it was a hopeless task.

We then turned to the surrounding territory and went over every foot of the ground. Little of interest was uncovered—only a few bone fragments and a flattened cartridge, until Walter who had been making use of his binoculars spotted some white objects about a quarter of a mile away. These

turned out to be the bones of some small animal, possibly a coyote.

Nothing further of interest was found, and the search was abandoned and we returned to San Diego.

Here we have studied every possible angle of this mysterious desert tragedy.

This much we surmise: the victims, whoever they were, may have been traveling either the San Diego-Fort Yuma road, or the occasionally used trail from Fort Yuma to San Bernardino.

While the place is some little distance from the present Yuma road, it is not certain the old road was aligned exactly with the present one. A variance of five miles meant little or nothing in the early days when it often was necessary to make your own road.

But who were these unfortunate people? Prospectors? Emigrants? Soldiers? Passengers in a stage coach? Were they wiped out by Indians? The victims of bandits? Or was it a shooting scrape within a party?

Another vexing question for which we sought an answer was: Why were there no animal bones present? And what had happened to the stocks of the guns? Others equally as old have been found on the desert and the stocks have been reasonably well preserved. Another puzzling angle is the

stirrup from a side saddle or a child's saddle. Was it being carried as baggage, or did a woman or a youngster perish with the rest?

Most of the old Indian fighters have hit the long trail. But one, Barney McCoy, who was known as Buckskin Frank Leslie in Tombstone, and a wicked gun fighter in his own right, examined the guns and listened carefully to the story. Barney then 93 years old (he has since passed away), had fought Indians in Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, fingered the old cap and ball revolvers and his eyes lighted up.

"It wasn't Indians," he declared. "If it had been, they would have taken the guns."

However, many emigrant parties, prospectors and livestock men, were wiped out by Indians who roamed the western edge of the desert.

The Yuma and Cocopah Indians along the Colorado river and the Dieguenos and other tribesmen of the coastal mountain range were often at war with each other. The Algodones sand dunes where the massacre took place was a no-man's land between the warriors of the river bottom and those of the mountains. Either group may have made forays into the dune country.

The presence of so many weapons in use by the army might lead one to believe that soldiers were the victims. Shotguns, however, were not regular equipment.

That bandit raiders from across the border were the perpetrators of the killing is quite possible. The Mexican border is less than 10 miles south of the battle site.

A shooting affray within a party must be discounted, as they seldom

reach such proportions that all are wiped out.

The Overland stage lines running from San Antonio to San Diego followed a route around the dunes to the south, and no record had been uncovered of a stage coach disappearing in this section.

After weighing carefully these and other less likely explanations of the slayings, the writer offers the following possible solution to the mystery:

That the party was attacked by Indians and the animals were stampeded with the opening onslaught. A fierce fight ensued with both sides suffering losses. The skeletons found were so scattered, they could have belonged either to the attacking or defending party.

Dusk found nearly all of the defenders dead, with perhaps one or two survivors badly wounded, but still able to return the fire.

The attackers, unaware of the besieged's weakened condition, withdrew to await the coming of another day, or the arrival of reinforcements. And then—one of those desert stand storms which sometimes lasted for a day or two, blew up.

As the storm raged, the remaining defenders succumbed to their wounds, and they and their dead companions together with all equipment were buried deep in the sand. If the Indians returned, as doubtlessly they did, no trace of their victims remained.

Down through the years the graveyard of these unknown pioneers has probably been covered and uncovered many times by the sand storms that have swept that section. Lying well off the beaten path it might never have been discovered had it not been for Cleve Park's keen eye and innate curiosity.

Intrigued by what still may be discovered, Cleve, Walter and I, plan to visit the spot from time to time, hoping that the whims of the desert winds may again favor us, and brush back the sand that hides the rusted rim.

Perhaps there, or in the age-yellowed columns of some early newspaper, we, or some alert and interested reader, may learn the identity of that little band that perished so long ago.

Someone who reads this article may recall that grandparents or other relatives who emigrated to California in the early days, mysteriously disappeared.

If anyone has a clue that will assist in unraveling this mystery, communicate with Orion Zink, 2610 Montclair St., San Diego 4, California, or C. H. Park, 2962 Comstock St., San Diego, California.

Fall Rains Bring Promise of Plentiful Wildflower Display This Season

Gentle rains in October followed by lighter showers in December and warmer-than-usual winter temperatures give promise of an unusually colorful wildflower display on the Colorado desert this season. However, the extent of the floral parade is in the lap of the storm gods—for freezing temperatures may yet blight the young greenery.

Some of the flowers, encouraged by unusually favorable conditions, have jumped the gun on Nature's spring flower show. Desert lilies were blooming in Palm wash and Arroyo Salada early in December. Purplish verbena blossoms have been common on sandhills and along roadsides since late November. In some sections of the Borrego badlands, the lily plants almost carpet the ground, and from Ed Duval of the Borrego store comes the report that the lily plants in some parts of the valley are thicker than he has ever seen them before.

Here is the outline of flower conditions as observed at the first of the year along the route from Desert Magazine's Palm Desert office to the Pegleg Trek at the foot of Coyote mountain in the Borrego valley. Highway 111, between Palm Desert and Indio, verbenas blooming at roadsides and on sand dunes, with promise of an extensive show later. Highway 99, between Indio and the Borrego turnoff:

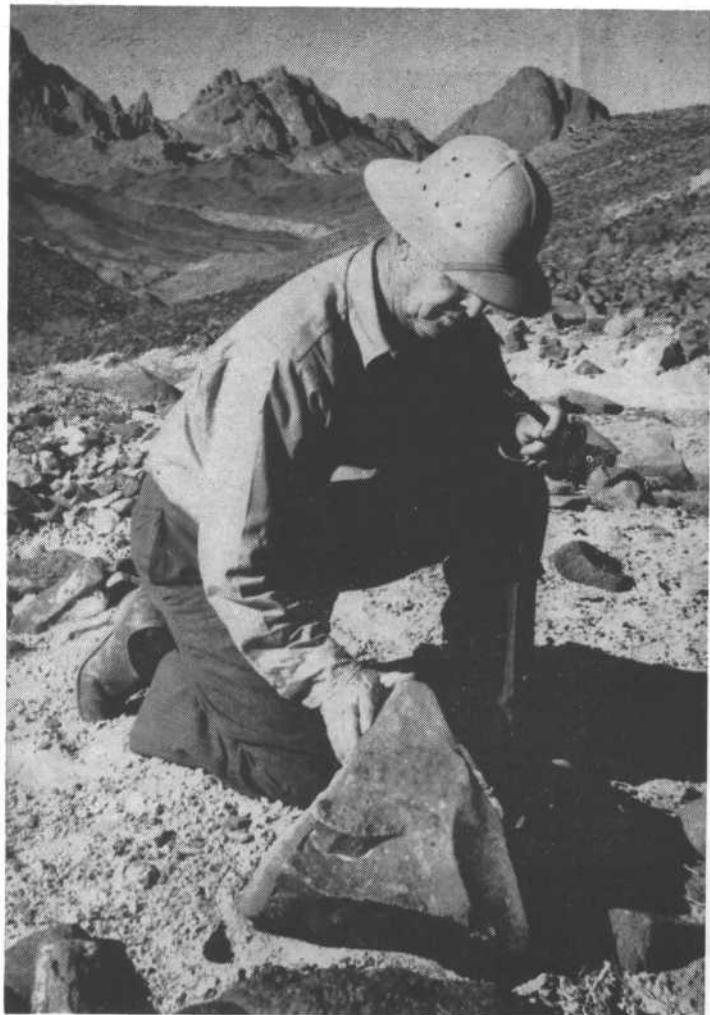
verbenas and geraeas blooming, and the plants of the white evening primrose were visible. Highway 78: Verbena and occasional geraea blooming, desert lily plants.

Just past Ocotillo, small white evening primroses were blooming and the young plants of the five-spot mallow, other species of evening primrose, forgetmenot, verbena and desert lilies made a low mat along the roadside. A little farther on palafoxia and desert lavender were blooming.

Along the road from Highway 78 into the valley, chuparosa, white four-o'clock and a few incense bushes were blooming. Many small plants of phacelia and pincushion flower could be seen. Beyond Borrego school, verbena and fiddleneck were blooming. At the campsite, at the foot of Coyote mountain, *Dalea mollis* was starting to bloom, desert lavender was in full bloom and many chuparosas were in blossom. There were many young phacelia and lupine plants, a few of the latter budded. The ground was still moist in Borrego valley, adding to the promise of a good show later.

In the Yaqui well area chuparosa was blooming and bladderpod starting to bloom.

Desert Magazine's regular spring flower reports from various sectors of the desert Southwest will start, as usual, in the March issue.



C. S. Walker of Gold Rock ranch with one of the oddly incised boulders which cover the ground in Indian Pass. So far, only guesses have been made as to why the Indians made these markings or how long ago it was done.



One of the ancient Indian trails at Indian Pass, cleared of rocks by the tribesmen many generations ago. In the picture are Kenneth T. Fine and Edwin R. Coile of the Border patrol and Bob and C. S. Walker.

Rockhound Trail to Indian Pass

Here's a field trip with everything—dumortierite (desert lapis) and petrified palm rock for the rock collectors, ancient Indian markings and trails for the archeologist, an old ghost town and mine workings for the historian—and a clean expanse of rock-strewn desert slashed by numerous arroyos for those who like to prowl the desert country for the fun of exploring a new area.

By HAROLD O. WEIGHT

HERE is a gap in California's Chocolate mountains known as Indian pass. In the unwritten past, the lean brown men of the desert gathered in the pass and scratched

lines through the varnish on hundreds of volcanic rocks, to form squares and oblongs and diamonds. The ancient trails through the pass, the rock circles, the potsherds, the trail shrines and

petroglyphs there—these we can understand. But why did our desert predecessors scratch apparently aimless patterns on all those rocks?

I had heard of the strangely marked stones in the pass long before I found an opportunity to visit them. And the fact that the road there traverses a gem field where magnificent specimens of dumortierite and petrified palm root have been collected whetted my desire to go. But when I made the trip, I wanted to continue through Indian pass and follow the twisting thread of road marked "4S Ranch" all the way to the Colorado river. And to do that I needed a car able to claw sand with all four feet.

Our jeep pickup, the Packrat, already shortened to "Packy," seemed to fill all the specifications and our first trip to Indian pass was made in the spring when flame-tipped ocotillos marched over the mesas and the golden-flowering palo verde trees glorified the washes of the Cargo



Indian Pass, where the 4S ranch road plunges into Gavilan wash. Indian rock circles may be seen, left of the road at the canyon rim, and the old trails are light lines in the dark malpais, also left of road.

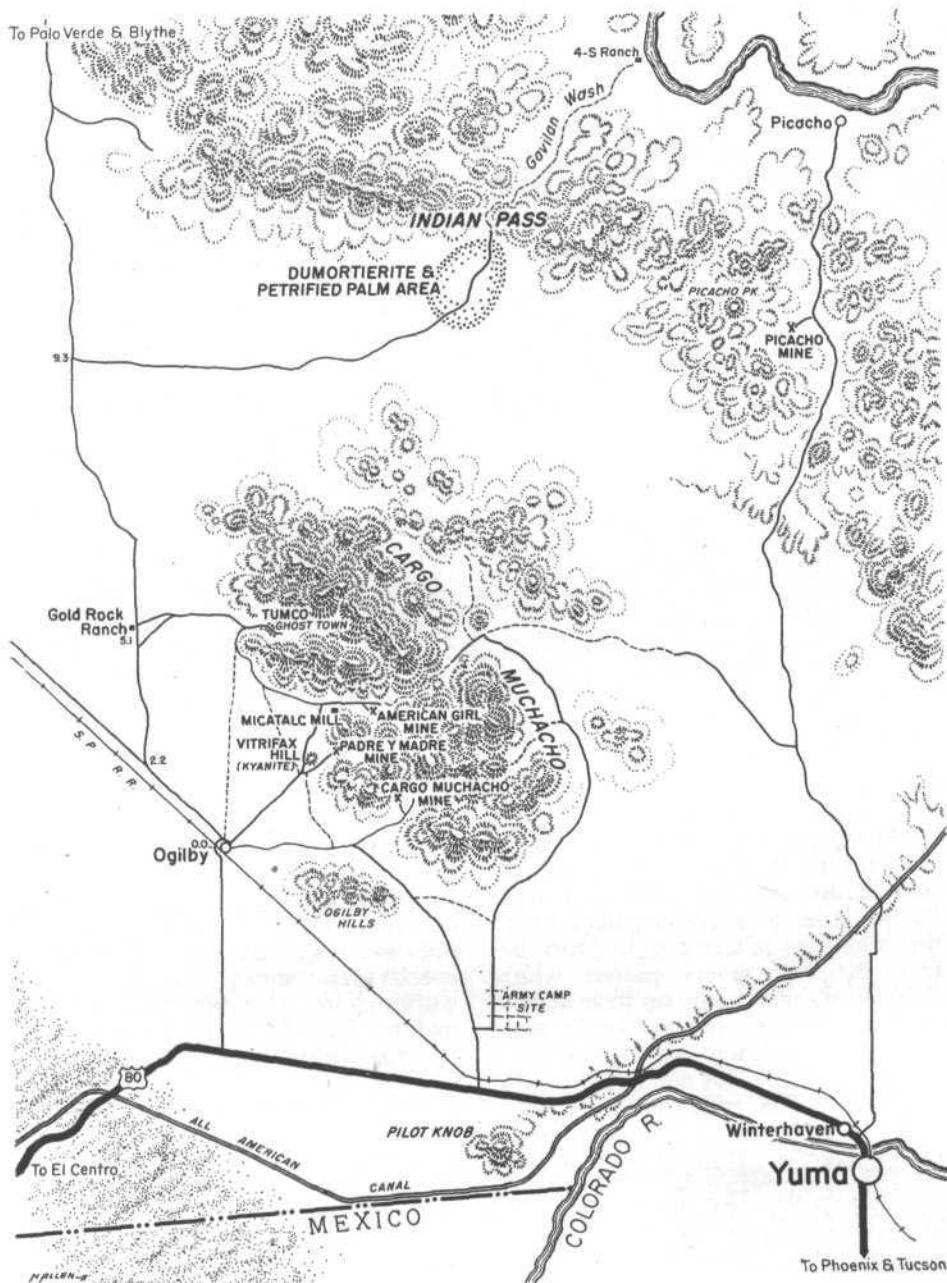
Muchachos. The road to the pass properly starts from Ogilby, the Southern Pacific railroad station and settlement four miles north of U. S. Highway 80. Other roads start at Ogilby and penetrate the canyons of the Cargo Muchacho mountains, and visitors will be well repaid if they can find time to become acquainted with some of the mines, past and present, in that historic range.

Mining has been carried on in the Cargos since the days when Spain ruled the Southwest. The road east from Ogilby leads to Jackson gulch, where the Mexicans placered gold years before the Forty-niners passed within sight of the mountains on their way to the Mother Lode country. In the same canyon is the Cargo Muchacho mine, developed in the '70s and a ghost camp by 1900. The road northeast from

Ogilby runs up the bajada to Vitrefrax hill, from whose scarred surface the Bluebird quarry furnished kyanite for ceramics. During World War II, kyanite was a strategic mineral, used for special refractories. At present the workings are idle, but below the hill and in the washes, specimens of the beautiful blue mineral may be collected. The road east of Vitrefrax hill leads to Madre valley where rich oxi-



Some of the remaining buildings at Tumco. The white building, left, formerly company hospital, has been burned out by vandals since the picture was taken.



dized surface gold ore was mined before the California gold rush and where the Padre and Madre mines are located.

Northeast of Vitrefrax hill, reached by the main road which keeps to the left of the hill, is the Micatalc mill and properties. The Micatalc was one of the few mines actually shipping when I visited the area. It quarries and mills sericite from Micatalc hill. Up the canyon from the Micatalc is the camp of the American Girl, one of the old time rich gold producers, which has had several periods of productivity. Weathering adobe buildings used for storage mark the site of the earlier camp there. All these mines are being held, either by assessment work or as patented claims. The owners live at some of them. Visitors usually are welcome, but trespassers are not. It

is an odd quirk of human nature that some people who would be horrified at the thought of breaking into a private home and stealing will break windows in a temporarily deserted camp in the desert and carry off anything that is loose.

For the trip to Indian pass, we zeroed the speedometer at Ogilby and started out on the Ogilby-Palo Verde road which crosses the railroad then swings northwest, paralleling the rails to 2.2 miles where the road divides. We followed the right branch, marked with a sign for the Gold Rock ranch, and the ranch was reached, to the west of the road, at 5.1 miles.

Gold Rock guest ranch is a sort of headquarters for rockhounds visiting fields in the Cargo Muchacho area. The Walkers—C. S. and Margaret Walker and their son, Bob, and

daughter-in-law, "Scotty" — who own and operate the ranch, are collectors themselves and are glad to have the rockhounds stop, see their specimens, and ask questions about material to be found in the district.

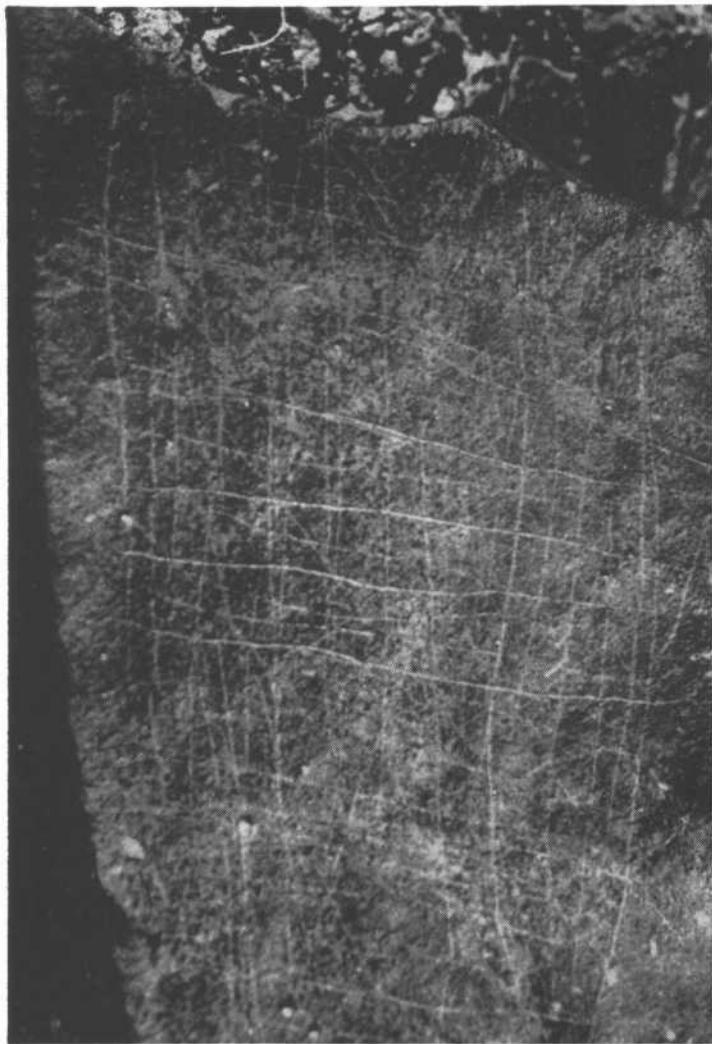
The Walkers are owners of Imperial county's biggest ghost town—the old Tumco gold camp. The road to Tumco, which lies in a valley in the Cargo Muchachos two miles to the east, cuts off right at the ranch and is marked with an Auto club sign. C. S. Walker came to these mountains 22 years ago, and the family lived at the old mining camp. Tumco was a company town on company land, and when the Walkers bought the mining claims, the ruins went with them.

Tumco was a rough town in its day. It received its name from the initials of The United Mines Company. Before that corporation took over, the locality was known as Gold Rock and Hedges. The camp was most active at the end of the last century and the beginning of this, when it attained an estimated peak population of 2500. There was rich ore in the Tumco mines in the early days, but the greatest part of its production was from low grade and there still are big reserves which run a few dollars to the ton, 65 per cent free milling. A great deal of development was done and the huge stamp mill on the hill, said to be the largest in the world, crushed so much ore that the tailings poured down across the townsite, causing buildings to be abandoned and encroaching even on the old graveyard.

Tumco has two graveyards, the older one in the valley, the newer out on the flats at its mouth. Both hold the now-quiet remains of many a brawling miner and camp-follower who died violently. C. S. Walker says that when he first came to Tumco, there were crosses or headboards on all of the graves and most of them could be identified. Today souvenir hunters have hauled off all but a few.

Big scale mining ended at Tumco about 1909, according to Walker, when the company was in the hands of receivers. There have been sporadic attempts to revive the camp. Prospectors have scratched around and the tailings have been reworked. A new strike, lowered production costs or an increase in the price of gold probably would activate Tumco again.

Since they have held the Tumco properties, the Walkers have welcomed visitors to the old camp, realizing the fascination a ghost town holds for many people. But in a recent wave of vandalism, four buildings in Tumco have been burned, including the old hospital. And someone set fire to the



Hundreds of rocks in Indian pass show scratched cross lines like these. This particular specimen apparently had a diamond pattern under the more recent squares.

main shaft which serves the Golden Cross, Golden Queen and Golden Crown mines. The eight-inch timbering thus senselessly destroyed would cost \$15,000 to replace today. C. S. Walker made a gesture of helplessness as he told me about it.

"We don't know what to do," he said. "We don't want to close the old camp to the public, but if such destruction continues, there won't be any Tumco." Tumco still is open. But visitors will be doing all desert people and desert lovers a service if they will report immediately to the Walkers at Gold Rock ranch any vandalism which they are not able to stop.

While living at Tumco, Walker homesteaded the 160 acres down from the mouth of the canyon where the Gold Rock ranch now stands. C. S. and his son, Bob, built the big rambling ranch building and cabins themselves. They drilled a well and at 521 feet found all the water they need. Their guest ranch has been opened

since the war. Guests are welcome to go with the Walkers on prospecting and gem-hunting trips and, if interested, they are taught how to pan gold. Most of the guests who are not rockhounds are converted before they leave the ranch.

From Gold Rock ranch we followed the main road toward Palo Verde to 9.3 miles, then made a right-angled turn onto the 4S road, marked by a cairn of stone. The route lay northeast across almost level flats with old Picacho peak a landmark ahead. Many rockhounds had followed this trail, and in patches the tires threw great clouds of fine dust upward where cars had broken through the crust. At 11.9 miles we reached the first of the rock-splattered hills which rise from the plain to Indian pass and the road started to wind back into the hills. We halted at several points along this hilly section until Indian pass was reached, and bits of dumortierite, jasper and agate were found at all stops.



Margrete (Scotty) Walker with the olla she found buried in a wash below an old Indian trail in the Cargo Muchacho area. Only the dark spot showed in the wash, but the olla was unbroken.

We reached the pass at 19.1 miles. The circles, paths and marked rocks lie to the left of the road just before it plunges into Gavilan wash on the way to the Colorado. I have always thought that when the Indians scratched symbols on stone, they had a definite reason for doing so. But these scratched rocks in Indian pass have me guessing. The marks aren't very deep — they can be duplicated by scratching the desert varnish on surrounding boulders with a sharp rock. But they must be old. They were reported by early visitors, and it is possible to overturn some rocks, undisturbed and half buried in the clayey soil, and find scratches on the under as well as the upper sides. The large number of marked stones would seem to rule out any possibility of a hoax or prank. When Malcolm Rogers, archeologist, investigated the pass years ago and dug in some of the rock circles, it is said that he found more conventional petroglyphs with the

lined stones. These, apparently, have been removed and only the scratched rocks remain today.

What can those scratches mean? A number of theories have been advanced. One is that the Indians gathered in the pass for religious ceremonials and kept time to their chants by striking the boulders with sharp rocks. Another identifies them as a sort of game or the score-keeping for a game. Ed Rochester, who lives at the old camp of Picacho and who has learned a great deal about the Colorado river Indians, says the Yumans have told him their people gathered at the pass for games and tests of physical strength. Apaches, he said, visited the area once a year to hunt mountain sheep. Apparently some religious significance was attached to the trek, since the Apache traversed several good hunting grounds to reach the one near the pass.

But I have an idea which seems as reasonable as others I have heard. Indian pass, obviously, was on a long-used trade or migration route. The trails through the sharp brown and black malpais were cleared entirely of rock. They can be followed as easily today—except where bushes have grown up and washes have cut through them—as when the last bare or sandaled feet traced them out generations ago.

But why was the campsite or stopping place or game field or religious center at the very top of the pass? There is little likelihood that there was any more water in the pass when the trails were used than there is today. Hunting should have been better and camping more protected on the mesas and in the washes toward the Colorado river.

However, the pass does lie close to the western boundary of the land once claimed by the Yuma Indians. And even if the first trail makers preceded the Yumans by centuries, as may be possible, this point marks the natural division between the valleys and river-bottoms of the Colorado and the great desert. And it is just possible that the camps in the pass were a sort of border guard station, the scratches on the rocks a tally of persons who used the trails. It might even have been an inspection station of the sort that troubles present day tourists on the California and Arizona state lines. It might have been the spot where tribute was collected from those who wished to fish or hunt in the river country.

The relatively good desert road ends at Indian pass. The auto trail then dives down a narrow canyon, edges around a hill and enters Gavilan wash.

The remaining seven miles to what is left of the 4S ranch on the banks of the Colorado are sand and gravel driving in the bed of Gavilan wash. It is a wild and beautiful region, from the pass to the river, but at the present time it can be recommended only for vehicles with four wheel drive or equipped for sand driving.

Early last summer a pickup, trying to go down the wash, became stuck in the sand. One man, affected by the heat, might have died but for the providential arrival of a bee-keeper driving down to check his stands by the river. But you cannot expect a traveler in Gavilan wash every day. And it is well to remember that every mile down the wash must be retraced. There is no road along the river to Picacho now. Waters backed up by Imperial dam have flooded it.

But no good driver should have trouble with the road southwest of Indian pass, and the great hunting ground of present day desert nomads lies there. On the yellow-brown, rock-spotted hills and slopes, members of the rockhound tribe have made their camps year after year. Instead of scratching the rocks they find, these tribesmen carry them away. From the area have come beautiful pieces of petrified palm root and fiber, blue dumortierite, silicified fossils, and jaspers, agates and chalcedony.

Few of the rockhounds go even as far as Indian pass. The road is rough the last half mile and in the actual pass area there does not appear to be a single bit of cutting material, although the rock-covered ground looks very much like that below. Apparently the black, volcanic mesas are of a later age and overlay the strata from which palm and dumortierite are weathering. The palm seems identical in types of replacement with that found near Yermo and in the Calico areas of the Mojave desert. It is possible that this field marks the southern shores of the same long-vanished lake in which the Yermo palm is believed to have been buried and replaced.

The washes, slopes and low rounded hills on either side of the 4S road have been examined rather thoroughly since *Desert* first told the story of the gemmy blue dumortierite there, in the April, 1938, issue. But every trip I have made into the field has resulted in discovery of material which should more than satisfy any amateur gem cutter. It remains a favorite hunting ground for many individuals and societies, since exceptional finds still can be made. The dumortierite appears to be concentrated in the area below and slightly to either side of the pass. Big boulders of the blue rock still can be

found. Most of them have been broken and they are too pitted or too coarse or too powdery to cut into gems although they make excellent specimens. The better rock for cutters seems to be found in smaller, compact pebbles.

While the area in which dumortierite is found seems to be limited, the malpais covered hills and washes extend for miles, especially to the west, and moss agate and palm root have been found as far over as the Ogilby-Palo Verde road. While collectors have hunted this entire area, they have not covered it as carefully as they have that along the Indian pass trail.

Rockhounds in the field miss a great deal because they keep their eyes fixed on the pebbles at their feet. But I can't believe many of them have failed to notice and speculate upon the ancient trails across their collecting grounds. I have found them in almost every canyon of the Cargo Muchacho mountains, across the surrounding mesas and up through the mountains along the river. Sections of these trails look so fresh they might have been used just before the last rain. Yet William P. Blake, geologist with the Pacific Railroad surveys, saw them in 1853 when he made a reconnaissance to the edge of the Cargo Muchachos, looking just as they do today.

"We crossed several long, pathlike discolorations of the surface," he wrote, "extending for miles in nearly straight lines, which were Indian trails. These trails seemed very old and may have endured for many generations." Blake saw the trails across the water-rounded pebbles of the Colorado river terraces. He thought the difference in color of the trails was due to removal or dimming of the polish on the pebbles. Since that "polish" was desert varnish and since only the top layer has the varnish, it is more likely that the Indians either removed the top layer deliberately or kicked it out of the way. The trails in this section are slight indentations in the surface of the plain.

That removal of stones interests me. It is hard to understand how these paths came into being in the first place. Unless there were migrations of great numbers of Indians along them, it hardly seems possible that they would be marked clearly enough by one traveling party to be followed exactly by the next. I can understand why the sharp-edged rocks were removed from trails in the Indian pass region. It would be difficult to make any progress, if the travelers were carrying any sort of burdens, unless the trail was cleared.

But on the pebble mesas, travel over



Bluebird quarry on Vitrefrax hill, where kyanite was mined before and during the war. Specimens of the beautiful blue mineral may be found in washes below the hill.

the small rounded stones would be no more difficult than over the grooved path, also floored with pebbles. Removal of the top stones might almost seem to be the work of Indian road-makers, so that others could follow the path.

According to Malcolm J. Rogers, there are several cultures, one imposed on the other, in the circles at Indian pass, and the trail may have been the main route of travel between the Colorado river and ancient freshwater Lake Cahuilla when that great body of water filled much of what is now Imperial valley. Other north and south trails followed the Colorado river from Nevada to Mexico — highways for aboriginal hunting, barter and warfare. But what of the ones which cut through the Cargo Muchachos, where there was neither game nor permanent water?

It would seem that at some time in the past—possibly during the existence of Lake Cahuilla—there was a large nomadic population making frequent trips from river to valley. The Kamia, a people believed to be of Diegueno origin, were inhabitants of Imperial valley before the white men came. They were a migratory group, planting maize, beans, pumpkins and melons in land around the sloughs of the Colorado, flooded by the summer overflow. In dry seasons they moved to the west bank of the Colorado in the Pilot Knob region and fished and grew melons there. This was Yuma territory, but the Yuma and the desert Kamia ap-

pear to have been on the best of terms. The Kamia may have had much to do with deepening many of the old trails, but their numbers were small and they certainly can not be responsible for all the trails.

The trail from Indian pass can be traced for long distances. To the south it crosses the land of Gold Rock ranch. C. S. Walker has traced it across his homestead. Whenever you follow one of these trails for any distance, he says, you will come across trail shrines and potsherds. But he has yet to find an arrowhead.

Scotty Walker, while on one of the trail-tracing trips, found the only unbroken olla I have seen from the Cargo Muchacho area. In a wash below the point where the Indian trail crossed, she saw a very round rock protruding from the sand. She investigated and the rock turned out to be a bit of the curve of the olla, which was buried and filled with sand and rocks. When she dug it out, it was unbroken.

How did that olla, unbroken, find its way into the wash? Why were the rocks in Indian pass scratched so oddly? Each time I see an Indian trail, a dozen questions rise in my mind. The *hohokam* have their interpreters, and specialists fall over one another investigating the pueblos and the beginnings of the Navajo. But there is so pitifully little known about our desert Indians.

One reason, of course, lies in the meager evidences which they left behind. Symbols chipped on rock, rings of stone, bits of pottery—and deep-

rutted trails across the desert land. But the trails, at least, will remind us of their passage as long as the mountains and mesas remain undisturbed. And I venture to guess that rock-hounds will be searching beside the old paths for dumortierite and palm root as long as the trails exist.

COMMISSION PROPOSES MORE INDIAN SELF-GOVERNMENT

A proposal that the nation's 400,000 Indians be given a bigger share in running their own affairs has been advanced by a committee of the Hoover commission. The committee, headed by George Graham, Princeton university, urges that tribal property be transferred to Indian-owned corporations. The government now holds legal title to most Indian land. In its report, the committee scolded the government for failure to bring about a greater improvement in Indian standards of living, education and health.

It proposed an intensified program of education and training in better farming methods, soil conservation and the management of Indian-owned grazing and timberlands. The government now spends \$40,000,000 a year on Indians, or about \$500 for each family. But most of the money, it was alleged, goes into salaries for 12,000 federal employees concerned in Indian affairs and on the operation and upkeep of schools, hospitals, reservation projects and roads. The report will be used as a basis for recommendations to congress by the Hoover commission.—*Gallup Independent*.



Photo taken by Thelma Neff along the road to Key's View in Joshua Tree National monument.

TOWN SHY

By JOHN E. KELLY
Pittsfield, Massachusetts

Go live in the city? Say, pardner, I'd rather
You'd put me to bed with a spade;
I'd be locoed and frazzled with all of the blather,
Nope, I'm no mind to trade!

There's worse than cabin fever in
A city's narrow street,
The skid row takes your bankroll an'
The tinhorn's got you beat.

The hardboiled hats and windy talk,
Coyotin' round the brim;
The store-bought duds and flat-heeled walk,
And "James" but never "Jim."

The dudes can have their towns and cars
And soft beds, every one;
Give me the light of Western stars,
As I head for the settin' sun!

Where the cowpokes yip and the kyotes wail
And the grizzly roams at timberline,
From the Chinook Pass to the Chisholm Trail,
The open country—man, that's mine!

• • •

CHANGE COMES TO THE DESERT

By JANE WALKER
Indio, California

Forgotten site of ancient camp,
Where pottery sherds and fire-pits show
The home-place of a vanished race,
Desert dwellers long ago.

Then, brown children laughed and played,
While mothers, in the thicket's shade,
Fashioned the pots of clay to bring
Water, from the distant spring.

Now, man-tamed rivers, flowing through
Reflect the stars that shone on you.

ETERNAL HILLS

By LEE BANNING MORRIS
Santa Monica, California

With steps that did not falter, softly I trod
Upon the path up to the altar—that of God.
The hills around, the heavens near, so very near me.

I felt if my heart called . . . that you would hear me.
Unhappy? No. Just wondering of so many things.
The moon . . . the stars . . . this life . . . and all it brings.

The Great Mystery over the hills enfolded
Me, and almost unsuspected, molded
My heart, my soul, to fit the niche I'm given,
To help others, and so doing, lead them on to Heaven.

Oh, friend, I seemed so close to all Divine!
Such sweetness, unsurpassed joy, and hope, were mine.
I raised my arms, and with my yearning fingers
I touched your hands . . . with sadness that still lingers.

They comforted, as on some happy morrow
Perhaps their clasp will free my heart from sorrow.

I will step on. God grant it may be higher,
To the eternal hills of my desire.

Forever

By TANYA SOUTH

Forever is so long a word!
Just think, 'twas only yesterday
Our gaseous planet Earth was stirred
Into this hardened form of clay
And water. And I look about,
At all the heavenly forms I see,
And know they are without a doubt
A tick-tock in Eternity.

The Litter-lout

By ROLAND HARTLEY

Now in the springtime of the year
When birds and blossoms re-appear,
We find the traces all about
Of the animal called the Litter-lout.

The Litter-lout loves beauty, so
You find his traces when you go
In search of some secluded spot
Where nature reigns and man is not.

Along cool paths where a soft breeze steals
You find his scattered orange peels;
Stopping to gaze around, you're near
His punctured cans that once held beer.

Some greasy papers, bottles, a few
Tin cans, a rotting pear or two
For perfume—there can be no doubt
That this is the haunt of the Litter-lout.

There is something in the human spark
That makes man want to leave his mark
Upon the world—and here we spy
The work to know the Litter-lout by.

It is pleasant to learn the names of things
As the years march on through the passing springs;
So don't forget that you've heard about
The animal called the Litter-lout.

• • •

TO THE DESERT

By ANNA M. VERNER
San Diego, California

Oh, Mother grim, of grey and silent sand
And mountains, hoary too, and yet still dark,
What mem'ries lie beneath your savage breast
To burn you so by day
And chill you cold at night,
Why keep us, men, on never finished quest?

Dream you of ancient, life-filled sea, or
Once fresh, green land, held in your wide embrace?

Mourn not, nor rebel, for in austerity
You still are beautiful
With strange, green growing things
'Gainst sand and sky — the past's posterity.

Oh, sternly silent one, whose voiceless voice
Stills speech, once in a year you smile, and then
Bright flowers, like miracles, burst forth.

Come they
From beauty past, or as
Promise of that to come?
Oh, Sphinx-lipped Desert, speak but once,
and say!

• • •

THE RICH REWARDS

By GRACE CULBERTSON
San Diego, California

There may not be much money made by verse,
And poetry, I grant you, earns poor pay;
But now and then I think we need rehearse
The rich rewards that come a poet's way.
For there is other coin than that of banks,
And gold and silver soon are lost or spent,
But what encouragement is there that ranks
With knowledge that your words have pleasure lent?

And when in some far place your friend is thrilled
To find a Desert with the lines you wrote,
And feels you nearer, is there not fulfilled
A destiny fantastic and remote?
I would that words of mine could always end
By going far enough to reach a friend!

Junipers on the Desert

By MARY BEAL

JOLIDAY greenery is found in the desert as well as in the areas more noted for their cone-bearing trees. The Junipers, closely related to the Cypress group, are abundant over a large part of the Southwestern desert regions. Their twigs and branches, especially, are beautifully adapted for festive decorations, such as mantel adornment, garlands, festoons and table arrangements.

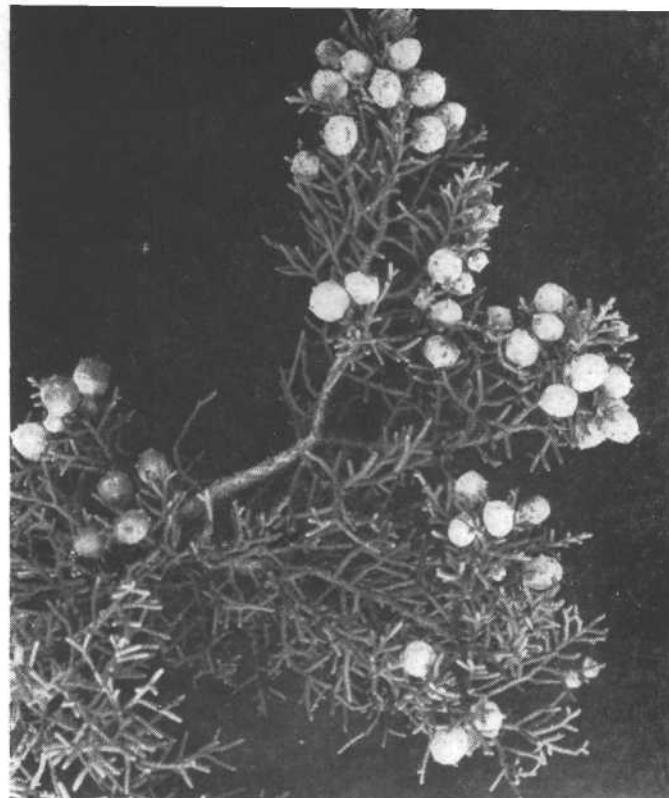
But junipers serve utilitarian purposes as well as decorative. From ancient days their foliage and fruit have been valued for therapeutic virtues, oil of Juniper being used extensively as medicine. The berries were used for food as well as medicine, both fresh and dried and ground into meal. Although the heartwood is very durable and much used for lead pencils, in the Southwest it serves chiefly for fence posts and fuel.

Junipers are easily identified by their small berry-like cones, which are made up of fleshy scales, grown together and never separating nor becoming woody as do the true cones. The leaves of most species are minute and scale-like, closely appressed and overlapping along the stem. Because of its similarity to the one in everyday use, the botanical name of the genus, *Juniperus*, is easy to remember. The commonest species in the Southwest is the Utah Juniper.

Juniperus utahensis

By some botanists classed as a variety of *Juniperus californica*, which it resembles, and you'll find it in some Floras under the name *Sabina utahensis*. Ordinarily it is a small shrubby tree 10 to 20 feet high with a definite trunk, the crown sometimes pyramidal when young, usually rounding and spreading when older, often reaching nearly to ground level. But they are markedly variable. Some cover the span of life as large shrubs. Most of them, as trees, develop compact shapely crowns but now and then become scraggly. I know a few gaunt, weather-worn old trees that reach up 20 or 25 feet with two or three stout branches above a bare length of sturdy trunk, showing little foliage on the lower third of the tree and that on the upper part not at all dense. They stand out from their run-of-the-mill associates as the personification of rugged endurance, as full of individuality and character as hardy old pioneers. Generally the limbs are quite straight, rising above the base of the brownish-grey trunk, the bark fibrous and shreddy. The fleshy, globose, reddish-brown berries covered with a white "bloom," the pulp dry and

California Juniper, growing here with Joshua trees in western Mojave desert, attains a height of from six to 15 feet. Beal photo.



Berry-like cones of the California Juniper are blue with a dense silvery bloom, so numerous the whole shrub sparkles in the sunlight. Beal photo.

fibrous but sweet, a favorite food for the birds and other wildlife in their neighborhood.

You'll find this valuable drought-resistant species in abundance at elevations of 3500 to 7000 feet over most of Arizona, throughout Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and over all the higher mountain ranges of the eastern Mojave desert in California. They consort with the Pinyon pines in the higher parts of their range. Below the Pinyons and on lower, drier mountains they often form extensive open forests, reaching for many miles. In central and northern Arizona, southern Nevada and Utah these Juniper tracts are vast enough to be of much importance, and I know more than one pure stand of far-reaching extent in the eastern Mojave desert. In California, west and south of the domain of the Utah Juniper is another species of importance, the California Juniper.

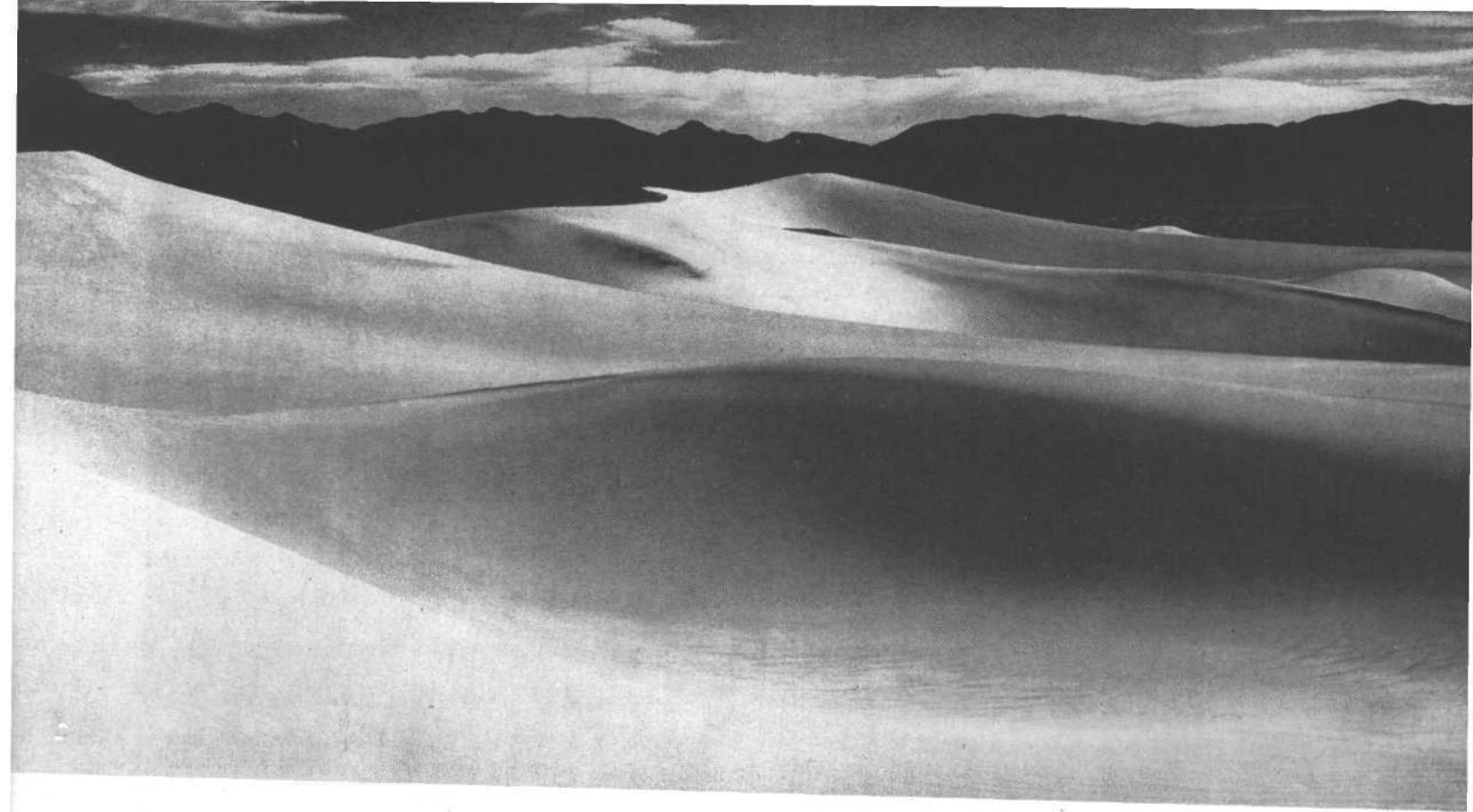
Juniperus californica

Much like the Utah Juniper but more shrubby as a rule, only occasionally becoming a tree 20 to 40 feet high. The leaf-scales have a noticeable gland or pit on the back and the berries are larger, with more prominent projections. At first they are blue, with a dense silvery bloom, so numerous the whole shrub seems to sparkle in the sunshine. In its common form the many branches rise from near the base to form a dense rounding bush 6 to 15 feet high. It grows in abundance at medium altitudes on the bordering mountain slopes and high mesas at the west side of the Colorado desert down into Lower California, and in the western Mojave desert along the slopes of the mountains flanking the valleys on the south and west, and north to the Panamints. Similar to the preceding species is One-seed Juniper.

Juniperus monosperma

It grows bush-fashion, the curving branches starting from the base. The twigs are four-sided, the berries blue and succulent. Common over much of Arizona, eastern Nevada, and Utah, often in association with Utah Juniper. At higher altitudes in the same general range, you'll find the Rocky Mountain Juniper.

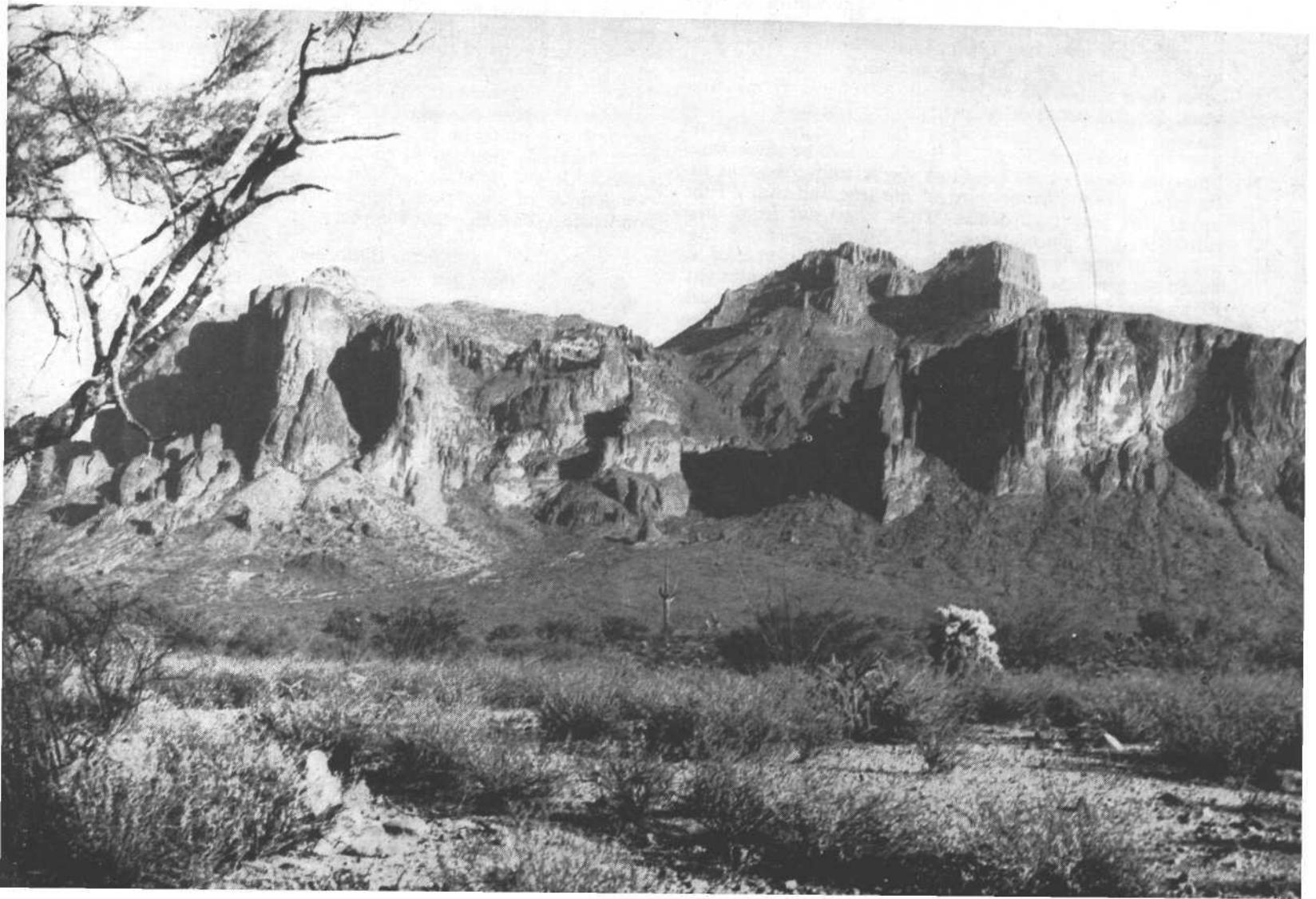




Pictures of the Month

First Prize winner in Desert's December contest was Egon Lempert, San Fernando, California, with the photo entitled "Sand Dunes in Death Valley."

Second prize went to Lewis M. Jones of Bisbee, Arizona, with his evening sunlit photo of Arizona's Superstition mountain. Taken with a 4x5 Ramlose press camera, 1/50 at f.16.





These strange figures, painted in red and black, were hidden for centuries on the roof of their isolated cave in the San Baltazar mountains of Lower California.

We Found the Cave of Lost Art

The forgotten by-ways of Lower California still hold many mysteries. Here is one of the strangest—a great pre-historic painting on the roof of a cave in an unknown canyon of the San Baltazar mountains. The very memory of the makers of the painting has passed away. But Edward H. Davis, who found it, declares this story to be entirely factual.

I WAS collecting in Lower California for the Heye Museum of the American Indian, New York, when I heard the story of the Lost Painting. Guillermo, my guide, told me about it as Roberto Thompson and I sat in the patio of Guillermo's home in Mulage in 1926. The fiery Mexican sun had vanished behind the great western mountains. We smelled the savory aroma of frijoles and enchiladas being prepared for our evening meal, and watched the little village inland from the Gulf of California awake.

With the setting of the sun it seemed as if every living thing in the pueblo had suddenly come to life. Nondescript brown dogs left the shade of adobe houses and ran down the unpaved streets to the accompaniment of their staccato barking. Pigs and chickens explored the town, hoping to find bits of food that had escaped their earlier searchings. Between the trunks

By EDWARD H. DAVIS
As told to JOHN CRIPPEN, Jr.

of the giant palm trees lining the shore, I could see the tiny fishing boats with jaunty sails entering the harbor.

Guillermo had been strangely silent for half an hour. When he spoke he approached the subject hesitantly. "You are here to buy things for the *gran museo en Nueva York*. But would you be interested in seeing one of the strangest sights in all Mexico, but something which you cannot buy or take away from Baja California?"

Of course I was interested. "What is it?" I asked. "And where is it?"

Guillermo seemed to be choosing his words with care. "Many years ago, when I was a boy, I heard of this thing—a giant painting that is hidden in a cave in the mountains. It is not painted on canvas as we would do it today. It is painted on the roof of the

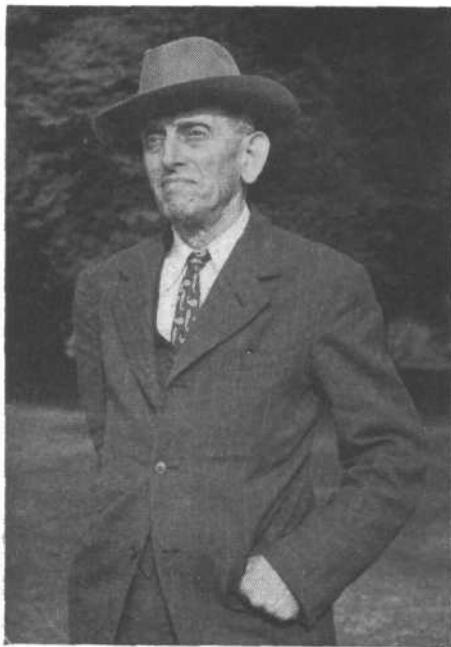
cave and it was hundreds of years old when Cortez conquered Mexico. It is, perhaps, 50 or 60 kilometers from Mulage. All my life I have wanted to search for it and have never had the opportunity."

I looked at my friend Roberto. He was as fascinated with the story as I. Guillermo could see that our minds were made up.

"Good!" he said. "Perhaps it is nothing more than a story that has been passed down from the ancient people. But we shall see."

We set out the next morning as the sun rose over the wide gulf, heading toward the distant San Baltazar mountains to the west.

We had three riding mules, one pack mule, and a large supply of food, water and blankets. For the first few miles we traveled through a wonderful forest of giant saguaro and cardon cactus. The trunks of some specimens were



Edward H. Davis, who discovered Lost Painting in Lower California while collecting for the Heye Museum of the American Indian 22 years ago.

five feet in diameter and they must have been 40 feet in height. Guillermo rode in the lead, then Roberto Thompson. I followed with a rope to the pack mule.

After about two hours, we entered the foothills of the San Baltazar range. By noon, we were climbing the mountains that form the backbone of Lower California. Our mules were walking on loose rock a great part of the time, and we often were forced to ride within a few feet of cliffs with a sheer 100-yard drop.

After we made camp that evening, Guillermo told me he was going to hunt fodder for the mules. I looked at the cactus and stunted, spiny desert growths covering the surrounding mountains and turned back to him with a smile.

"Que una bromita!" Guillermo shook his head. "No, Señor, it is no joke. I'll show you."

We walked 100 feet to a small twisted tree that looked similar to the Arizona palo verde. Guillermo started to hack off the thorny, almost leafless branches with his machete.

"Do you mean the mules can eat this?" I asked incredulously.



Roberto Thompson stands beside a giant cardon cactus on the trail to the painted cave.

Desert's Prize Photo Contest . . .

If you know the desert and can picture its sunlight and shadow, its strange plant and animal life, the evidences of its historic past—your photo can win in Desert's monthly contest. The contest is open to amateur or professional photographers, prizes are awarded to the picture the judges decide best presents some phase of the desert or of desert life.

Entries for this month's contest must be in the Desert Magazine office, Palm Desert, California, by February 20, and winning prints will appear in the April issue. Pictures which arrive too late for one month's contest are entered in the next. First prize is \$10.00; second prize, \$5.00. For non-winning pictures accepted for publication, \$3.00 each will be paid.

HERE ARE THE RULES

1—Prints for monthly contests must be black and white, 5x7 or larger, printed on glossy paper.

2—Each photograph submitted should be fully labeled as to subject, time and place. Also technical data: camera, shutter speed, hour of day, etc.

3—PRINTS WILL BE RETURNED ONLY WHEN RETURN POSTAGE IS ENCLOSED.

4—All entries must be in the Desert Magazine office by the 20th of the contest month.

5—Contests are open to both amateur and professional photographers. Desert Magazine requires first publication rights only of prize winning pictures.

6—Time and place of photograph are immaterial, except that it must be from the desert Southwest.

7—Judges will be selected from Desert's editorial staff, and awards will be made immediately after the close of the contest each month.

ADDRESS ALL ENTRIES TO PHOTO EDITOR

THE **Desert** MAGAZINE
PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA

The dark little Mexican looked at me with a twinkle in his eyes. "Indeed they can, Señor Davis. This tree is called the *dipua*. It is the best fodder for mules and burros that grows in Lower California."

Sure enough, as soon as we had watered the animals, they attacked the thorny pulp with the same enthusiasm that a Kansas plow horse would show for a bag of oats.

We were on our way shortly after daybreak. The country became even more rugged and forbidding. Many times, the mules were forced to climb precipitous slopes, and to skirt deep gashes in the earth. The giant rocks on the mountainsides had been colored a deep red by thousands of years of exposure to brilliant sunshine. Occasionally, Guillermo stopped to get his bearings. Then we plunged down to the next canyon where thorny desert bushes tore at our clothing.

Toward noon, Guillermo stopped his mule and pointed ahead with obvious excitement.

"There it is, Señores! See the splinter?"

We saw a tall spire of rock, half as high as a skyscraper, that was detached from the nearby cliff and pointed directly upward.

"That is our landmark, Señores. If the story is true, we are not far from the lost painting in the cave!"



Edward H. Davis at the trail's end, gazing at the figures on the roof of painted cave.

Even the animals seemed to sense our excitement, and we proceeded at a brisk pace, hugging the side of the canyon as we scanned the rocky walls for any sign of an opening.

Guillermo was the first to see it. "Look, Senores," he called. "Up ahead!"

I saw what appeared to be a shadow behind some large boulders. Then we passed behind shrubbery on the desert floor and I was unable to see the cave again until we rounded a corner and arrived at the entrance.

The opening was enormous—a great gash fully 20 feet high, and 100 feet wide in the side of the mountain. The floor was level and sandy, and as we rode inside, triumphant English and Spanish yells reverberated against the walls. There, on the ceiling above our heads and stretching back into the cave as far as we could see, were the paintings! They were life-size, brilliantly colored in red, white and black. The giant mural depicted the scene of savage, prehistoric warfare and, after exploring the rear of the cavern which extended into the mountain for 90 feet, I set up my camera to record the strange sights that lay above us.

We counted 89 figures. Nearly all were men, but a few women and children could be identified. Most of them were standing, although a few lay in a prone position, and nearly all were painted half red and half black, vertically. Thus, the left side of each figure was colored a brilliant red, and the right side was in black. We noticed a few examples where the colors were reversed. Most of the heads were in red, and the arms and legs of all the figures were spread apart, showing the fingers and toes.

Many of the specimens were painted with arrows and spears protruding from them. One large figure, done entirely in white, was completely transfixed by a black spear. We speculated that this, perhaps, represented a chief of the opposing tribes.

One problem bothered us. With the enormous ceiling a full twenty feet from the floor of the cave, how did the prehistoric artist paint the mural? The desert shrubs in that region are so small and twisted that it would be impossible to fashion them into a ladder. We finally concluded that great quantities of rock must have been carried into the cavern to make a raised platform reaching nearly to the roof. Then, when the work was finished, the rock was carried out to the floor of the desert.

As we returned to Mulage, we speculated as to what tribe of Indians could have executed this remarkable drawing. Lower California was first explored in 1539. The early Spaniards left quite voluminous records on the Indians of that day. This section of the peninsula was populated then by three tribes, the Cochimi, the Guayacura and the Pericues. They were all so primitive that it seemed beyond belief that they could have executed the giant mural.

As soon as we reached Mulage, I went to Father Cesar Casaldi, the local Catholic priest, an outstanding authority on the Indians of Lower California. He agreed that it was impossible that the aborigines of the colonial days could have painted the huge mural, and it certainly was not done since that time. Father Casaldi told me, however, that the early Indians did

paint themselves red and black when going to war.

We reached the same conclusion—the painting must have been done by a superior and unknown race inhabiting Lower California between 500 and 1500 years ago. The more primitive local Indians of the Spanish colonial period, although unable to execute any such project as this, probably retained the custom of red and black war paint.

We discovered the giant painting 22 years ago and it is still there, jealously hiding the secret of its antiquity. It will be there long after modern works of man have fallen into decay—inscrutable, a puzzle for the ages.

Hard Rock Shorty

of Death Valley



"Yep, they's a lotta mineral springs over in the Amargosa country," Hard Rock was explaining to the crowd of tourists on the porch at Inferno store.

"There's that alum spring up Eight Ball crick. Over in them badlands is the soda springs. An' there's salt springs and a lotta others, but one yu want t' keep away from is that magnetic spring up near Pisgah Bill's ol' iron mine. That water has so much pull to it it'll jerk the tin can right out a yer hand when yu try to dip up a drink."

"Ol' Pisgah usta get a lot o' meat off that little pond below the spring. Duck's 'd fly in there to spend the night when they wuz comin' south in the fall. When one o' them birds had a band on its leg, like them bird migration fellers put on 'em up north every season, the duck couldn't take off again. Too much magnetism in that water."

"Bill had duck meat all one winter, but he finally had to give it up. Ate so much o' that magnetized bird meat his stomach got magnetic. Swallered his knife one day an' if there hadn't been a doctor over at the Consolidated mine Bill would 'a strangled to death."

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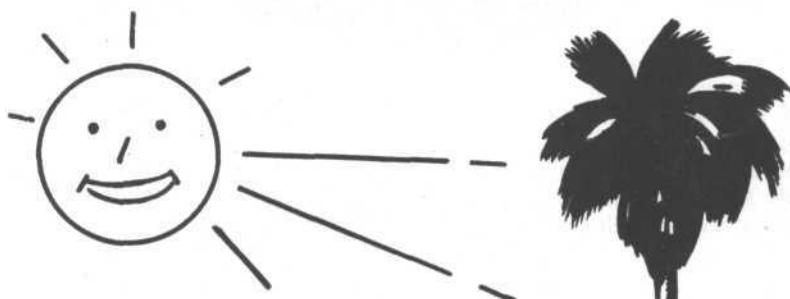
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THE
DESERT
INN

PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA

600 Take Part in Pegleg Field Day

The desert still holds the secret of Pegleg Smith's lost gold, despite the quest of more than 600 visitors who deposited the traditional 10 rocks on the Pegleg monument and then roamed over the Borrego desert in the second annual Pegleg Gold Trek on New Year's day.

This year's Pegleg program started on the previous evening when nearly 300 campers spread their bedrolls among the greasewood on the surrounding desert and then formed a circle around a huge campfire to hear the tall tales of the contestants in the Liar's Contest.

Winner of the contest was Roy Hicks of Costa Mesa, California, in the role of a reincarnated Pegleg Smith. He stumped into the circle on a wooden leg and recited a poem he had written. John Hilton was awarded second prize, but withdrew in favor of Guy O. Glazier of Boulevard, California. Two large collections of phonograph records brought down from the Knott Berry Farm by Ray Hetherington were awarded as prizes.

Harry Oliver, editor of *Desert Rat Scrapbook*, was master of ceremonies and kept a lively parade of contestants and impromptu entertainment in progress. John Hilton with his guitar and Ted Hutchinson with his Mexican songs were called on repeatedly for musical numbers.

After the contest ended Hilton tossed 11 of his 1948 oil and canvas paintings on the fire in accordance with his annual custom of starting each New Year by burning what he calls "the mistakes" of the previous year.

Early the following morning additional hundreds of trekkers arrived to enjoy a field day on the desert. The floor of Borrego valley in many places was covered with an early display of wildflowers and the visitors hiked over the countryside or up the palm canyons. Many of them visited the fine new Desert Resort Hotel erected by the Hoberg family at the entrance to Borrego palm canyon which has been completed during the past year.

Among the old-timers present at the campfire party were A. A. 'Doc' Beatty of Borrego, Desert Steve Ragsdale, Powder River Sackett, Hard Rock Hume, Bill McGee, Harry Woods, Ed Stevens, Sam Robinson, Howard Clark, Frank Kershaw and George Barrett.

LETTERS...

The Goat Editor Pulls a Boner...

El Centro, California
Desert:

The goat on the January cover is a tame Angora—not a wild goat at all—or perhaps a tame one gone wild. This writer knows, for he has seen hundreds of them recaptured in the mountains of southern Arizona.

LEO TURNER

Cashion, Arizona
Desert:

May I offer your editor a mild reproof for the title on your cover picture for January. It is a very fine picture and I would suggest that it be run again sometime. But next time please change the wording.

I live near the White Tank mountains. Have been all around and through them, and the same with nearly all the mountains in southwestern Arizona. In this part of Arizona there are no "Wild Arizona Goats." True there are many domestic goats gone wild. And I do maintain that the front cover is a very fine example of a pure bred Angora.

BEN HUMPHREYS

To readers Leo Turner, Ben Humphreys and the other 21 subscribers who called our attention to this incorrect title, Desert's goat editor apologizes for the error, and quotes Item No. 3 among his New Year resolutions, namely: "That during 1949 I will strive to keep those pesky goats in their proper zoological pigeon-holes."

Pitfall or Burial Ground?...

Las Vegas, Nevada
Desert:

I was much interested in the letter from Emma E. Ford of McGill, Nevada, in your December issue, with reference to the discovery of Lehman cave. In August and September of 1938, I was employed by the National Park service to remove that part of the deposit in the entrance of the cave chamber which was in the way of the new tunnel entrance then being constructed. We found parts of many human skeletons throughout the top half of the 20-foot deposit. During the course of this work I checked with old-time residents of the area regarding the discovery of the cave and their information is in complete agreement with that obtained by Mrs. Ford.

S. M. WHEELER

Houseboating on the Desert...
Mountain Center, California
Desert:

I am interested in John Edwin Hogg's suggestion in the editorial page of your January number. Houseboating should fit the Salton Sea very well. I put in years of house-boating in the New York area.

Houseboats need harbors. Harbors can be built in the shallow waters along the shore with dragline shovels, and islands can be created. Imagine a man-made atoll of desert sand with rock protection far enough out to be away from shore drift. Some things can be done in that direction by co-operative effort among interested people.

WILSON HOWELL

• • •

He's Not a Water Fowl...

Moab, Utah
Desert:

I enjoyed your editor's story of his boat trips on the San Juan and Colorado rivers. Last year in June I made the voyage through Glen canyon and noted "R. H. of Desert Magazine" in the registers along the way.

We had a strange experience just below the Crossing of the Fathers. Two young eagles were aroused by our talking and flew up from the shore and one of them soared down over us to have a look. He was careless and sailed in too close to the water. When his feet hit the water he tried to recover but it was too late. A wave struck his wings and he landed like a clumsy duck. He sat there a few moments and then slowly began to sink.

He struggled with his powerful wings to get free, but his feathers had gotten wet and he was unable to lift his body clear of the water. It was a hopeless struggle.

The current was swift and he soon disappeared in a riffle next to a cliff. When we again caught sight of him he was all submerged except his head and neck. When we finally caught up with him in our cumbersome rubber raft he was almost a drowned eagle.

We stuck a paddle under his breast and he clutched it for dear life. He rode the paddle for awhile and we finally got him into the raft. After about five miles he was dry enough to want to leave, but we realized that if we released him he might flutter to the bottom of the raft and his sharp claws could easily rip a hole and sink us all.

So we pulled in to shore and left him perched on a rock to dry out. The last we saw him he was still perched there in the hot afternoon sun.

C. W. ZUMWALT

When Pegleg Prospected the Mojave
Riverside, California
Desert:

On January 16, 1886, the Press and Horticulturalist, a 4-page, 8-column weekly newspaper edited by L. M. Holt of Riverside, and the antecedent of the present Riverside Daily Press, published a story which may interest the Pegleg trekkers.

Under the title "The So-Called Peg-Leg Mine" the story was contributed by a correspondent signing himself "An Old-Time Miner." The writer stated that he met Smith in San Francisco in 1854. Pegleg had been a Rocky Mountain trapper, and from 1850 to 1852 had operated a trading post on the Plains.

He was in San Francisco in 1854 to organize a small party to go prospecting on the Mojave river. The story Pegleg told was this:

"Twenty-two years ago (1832) a party of us was camped on the Mojave river and a Dutchman found what he called a piece of gold. We laughed at him and his gold, but am now convinced that it was gold. It was a piece about as big as the end of your thumb and pretty smooth. I think it was washed gold. I am sure I can find the old camping place, but I don't know exactly where the Dutchman found the piece, but it was near camp."

The correspondent was invited to accompany the party, but was unable to do so. Years later he met Pegleg again and Smith said to him: "We didn't get into the old camp. The Indians seemed pretty hostile and the boys wasn't very brave. We prospected some and found nothing."

The Old-Time Miner who reported this conversation, and later sent the story to the newspaper, was inclined to discredit the Pegleg gold discovery as a myth.

But please understand I am not trying to start a controversy. I merely am reporting what I read in that old Riverside newspaper.

CHARLES C. BAKER

• • •

Champion of All Liars...

Pinyon Flats, California
Desert:

Being an honest man, and never having stretched the truth in my life, I am puzzled to know who the h—named me as one of the judges in the Liar's Contest that precedes the Pegleg Smith lost gold trek in Borrego valley New Year's day.

My personal opinion is that the biggest liar of all is now dead. I refer to Ol' Pegleg Smith. The only thing that he knew about gold was the nuggets he

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hi-graded from some working mine dump, or stole off an Indian or honest prospector. He would pull out that pocket-worn nugget he carried around and tell a fabulous yarn about where it came from. The reason there are so many different versions of the Pegleg yarn is because he told a different story each time.

But we think it is okay if a lot of folks wish to gather around an open campfire in Borrego valley New Year's Eve and swap lies, which everybody knowing to be good-natured lies, cannot do any harm.

Maybe after all Ol' Pegleg did not live in vain, if he causes folks to get out in the clean desert hills, while pretending to hunt for a lost mine.

DESERT STEVE RAGSDALE

Friend Steve: Do you remember that day out at Desert Center 31 years ago when a tourist drove up to your gasoline pump and asked you if there were any rattlesnakes in Chuckawalla valley. And you replied: "H—no, they all broke their backs trying to follow them Ford tracks the tourists make across this valley." No, Steve, the champion liar isn't dead yet—and may he live to a ripe old age in his little shack on Pinyon flats.—R. H.

• • •

In Defense of Water-Witching...
San Pedro, California
Desert:

I am aware that many people are skeptical about the art of water-witching or dowsing.

But they are wrong. Certain people are gifted with the art of divining underground water channels. It isn't witchcraft. There is a very plausible explanation.

All plant and animal life is attracted to water. They must have it for without it they die. It is the old law of self-preservation with which all living things are endowed by Nature.

I do not know why one person can hold a green stick and sense the magnetic attraction between the stick and underground water—or why another person cannot do so. That is something beyond the present limitations of our knowledge. But I do know from my own experience that in prospecting for water in this manner after two hours where many underground channels exist I am physically exhausted, while I can carry the forked stick around all day over non-water bearing ground with no more fatigue than comes from the exercise of walking.

If medical science would find some measure for determining the energy or

strength lost during these water-witching sessions perhaps the way would be opened for a more unbiased approach to the art of dowsing.

Geological science dismisses the whole thing with this quotation, "Water-witching is the result of previous geological knowledge, or of mental influence."

Sure, they think we are crazy. But we will go on finding water just the same. And perhaps a future generation of scientists will provide the scientific basis for the thing we are doing.

C. W. MUNSON

DESERT CLOSE-UPS

Harold and Lucile Weight of the Desert Magazine staff resigned their positions in January to devote their time to the free lance field of journalism. Lucile has been a member of the staff since September, 1937, two months before the first issue of Desert was published. During the war she assumed the entire editorial responsibility for two years while Randall Henderson was in service in Africa. More recently she has devoted her time largely to the management of the circulation and book departments although continuing as an editorial associate. Harold came to the editorial staff in the fall of 1946, a few months after receiving his discharge as a staff sergeant in the army air corps, and in 1947 he and Lucile were married. He has divided his time between his editorial desk and field reporting, being accompanied on many of his field trips by Lucile. He has had some success as a fiction writer and plans to devote much of his time to that field of writing. His field trip stories in Desert have been one of the most popular features in the magazine, and he plans to continue as a contributor to this publication. The Weights have been highly efficient members of Desert's staff and their departure will be a matter of regret to their associates as well as to many of the magazine's readers who are personally acquainted with them. Martin Moran, who served in the navy during the war and has been a member of the staff the last two years, assumed the management of the circulation department, and Bertha Greeley Brown, member of the staff for three years, will become manager of the book department. A successor to Harold Weight's editorial position has not yet been named.

HERE AND THERE . . . on the Desert

ARIZONA

In Memory of the Wetherills . . .

KAYENTA—Lee and Frank Bradley are getting together selected blocks of native stone to form the cairn in which they will place a memorial plaque on the graves of Louisa and John Wetherill during the winter. Funds for the plaque and cairn were contributed by friends of the Wetherills and the arrangements made by a committee composed of Dr. Harold S. Colton of Flagstaff, Jimmy Swinnerton and Harry C. James. John Wetherill died in December, 1944, and his wife the following September.

Natural History Museum Planned . . .

PHOENIX—Plans for establishing a natural history museum at Phoenix are near completion, according to a report which Governor Dan E. Garvey received from a committee appointed by the late Governor Osborn to obtain the museum. The state already has received the collections of John Eagle and the noted scout, Major Frederick R. Burnham, and A. Kingsley Macomber is preparing to ship his collection to Phoenix. —*Tucson Citizen*.

Who Lost a Trailer and Car? . . .

PHOENIX—Attempts were being made in November to locate the owner of a rusted automobile and trailer which were buried under the bed of the Salt river during a flash flood in April, 1937. A power shovel of the Arizona Sand and Rock company uncovered the vehicles under 15 feet of gravel in a gravel pit. Al Carter, plant superintendent, said the company lost a truck in the same flood.—*Tucson Citizen*.

Reset Tucson Monument . . .

TUCSON—The monument on top of Sentinel peak, more commonly known as "A" mountain, which had been loosened by rain, was reset permanently December 14 by Tucson members of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The monument, located just south of the letter "A," was placed by the DAR during a convention in 1933, in recognition of the importance of the mountain in the lives of the pioneers. As early as 1692, according to Winona Jewell, DAR regent, the peak was used for signal fires which warned the Spanish pioneers of approaching Indians.—*Tucson Citizen*.

She Pioneered the Little Colorado . . .

JOSEPH CITY—"Grandma" Sophie McLaws, said to be the last of the original Mormon pioneers of the Little Colorado settlements, died November 27 at the age of 92. Mrs. McLaws first came to Joseph City, then known as Allen's Camp, in April, 1876, and lived with her husband at the fort located just east of the present city. She often declared that she had lived in three Arizona counties during her 72 years at Joseph City, without moving from the house her husband built for them. When she arrived, Allen's Camp was in Yavapai county. When the county was divided, her home became part of Apache county. In 1895, Navajo county was created and they lived in their third Arizona county without moving.—*Holbrook Tribune-News*.

can obtain the licenses by mail from the clerk of the superior court. Indians, however, may have their licenses issued by bonded superintendents or agents on the reservation.—*Coconino Sun*.

• • • Who Was Lost? . . .

YUMA—John L. Taylor, 68, who left Needles, California, on November 3 on a rubber raft, bound down the Colorado river for Yuma and who was reported missing for more than a week, was found November 21 at Alexander's landing, a few miles north of Imperial dam. Taylor, when found by a party of Yumans, was safe and sound and calmly fishing. He was disgusted, it was said, when informed that he had been believed lost on the river. "I didn't expect to make the trip in any 24 hours," he declared.—*Yuma Sun*.

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ONE OF NEVADA'S best turquoise mines. Ill health reason for selling. Box 121, Mina, Nevada.

PHOTOGRAPHS WANTED

DESIRE the two following Standard Oil pictures to complete my album. These pictures were given out in the summer of 1947. 1—Oak Creek Canyon, Arizona. 2—Monument Valley, Utah and Arizona. Will pay a reasonable sum for these or will exchange four of the Hawaiian pictures for them. Mrs. Dick Groot, 1039 S. Luder, El Monte, California.

REAL ESTATE

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DESERT ACREAGE—486 acres only \$5000. Includes good alfalfa, date and grape land and plenty of mountains. Water and electricity available. Carl Henderson, Realtor, P. O. Box 201, Palm Desert, California.

FOR SALE—Residence Lot 50x100, utilities in, membership in club, La Quinta, California. Price \$900. Maud C. Joss, 736 S. Madison Avenue, Pasadena 5, California.

YOUR DESERT HOME—Five acres, \$1000, terms. Nothing to compete with it. R. H. McDonald, Box 21, Desert Hot Springs, Calif.

USE THAT MONEY to build now—pay \$250 cash, balance monthly on Rancho homesites. No well to drill, no pump, tank or tower. Electricity and water mains now in—moderate restrictions. Total prices from \$750, insured title, wide view, near P. O., stores. Write for maps of this All-Year desert foothill tract. Clarke Battelle, Lucerne Valley, California.

DESERT HOMESITE—3½ acres planted to dates and grapefruit, all utilities, wonderful view, located ¼ mile from 100 Palms. Unbelievably low price, \$4000. Write Ronald L. Johnson, Realtor, Thermal, California.

MISCELLANEOUS

WHOLESALE LOTS, Cactus. Resurrection Plants, Boxed Cactus. Aztec Cactus Co., P. O. Box 833, Presidio, Texas.

GOLD! YOU CAN PAN GOLD—It's easy! Healthy, profitable occupation or hobby. Send for big, illustrated book, "Gold Panning for Profit"—\$1.00. Want some of my genuine California gold? One beautiful nugget, \$1.00. Four nuggets, \$2.00. Other wonderful specimens gold nuggets, \$5 and \$10 each. Desert Jim, 627 Lillian, Stockton, California.

CACTI AND SUCCULENTS—From the deserts of the world. Don-Rita brand. By appointment only. Write us your needs and we will try to help you. Michael Donnelly Cacti Gardens, 334 Lowell St., Daly City, California.

LEARN the profitable jewelry and goldsmithing trade at home. Simplified course teaches jewelry designing, manufacture and repairing; gemsetting, etc. Gemcrafters, Dept. F., Kallspell, Montana.

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PANNING GOLD—Another hobby for Rockhounds and Desert Roamers. Know how to pan gold, where to look for it and be able to recognize valuable quartz ledges. The places you go are where rich virgin ground is found. Two instruction booklets 25c or send your name for free literature and catalogue of mining books and supplies for beginners. Old Prospector, Box 21-B211, Dutch Flat, Calif.

KARAKULS—Producers of Persian Lamb fur are easy to raise, adaptable to any climate or altitude. For further information write Addis Kelley, 4637 E. 52nd Place, Maywood, California.

METEORITES WANTED, iron or stone, highest prices. Stuart Perry, Adrian, Michigan.

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DESIRE TO MEET middle aged health seeking unencumbered hiking and camping partner for desert trips, North, South Highway 80 between Jacumba and El Centro. Car desirable but not essential. I have all gear. Share gas and chow. Paul L. Cowgill, 4491 Thirty-ninth St., San Diego, Calif. Phone T6913.

FOR RENT—Rock shop and trading post on Highways No. 70 and 80. Two four-room partly furnished apartments. Display room 36x20. Two acres for parking. Long time lease to reliable party. Address P. O. Box 346, Deming, New Mexico.

FOR SALE—Deer, peafowl, pheasants, quail, Chimney Rock Ranch, Montezuma Valley, Santa Ysabel, California.

PURPLE SAGE HONEY—Two-pound jar of comb chunks, \$2.10. 5 lbs. of strained, \$3.00 prepaid. Tontz Honey Farms, Elsinore, Calif.

COLOR SLIDES—Travel, Nature, Geology, etc. Free list (with sample 30c, three for dollar). Kelly D. Choda, Box 5, Los Alamos, New Mexico.

FOR SALE—Karakul wool bed blankets, colors, blue, green, natural and maroon. Money back guarantee. Price \$17.50. Write Addis Kelley, 4637 E. 52nd Place, Maywood, California.

New Navajo Constitution? . . .

WINDOW ROCK—Provisions of a proposed new constitution for the Navajo Indians were to be explained at the December tribal council meeting at Window Rock. Norman Littell, tribal attorney, said that the constitution, which was drafted following conferences with representatives of the department of the interior, would not be voted on at this meeting. Earlier, James M. Stewart, general superintendent of the Navajo reservation, reported that the tribe has a net balance of \$2,906,355.38. The sawmill account contained \$900,000 of the total.—*Tucson Citizen*.

• • •
A flood control survey, extending from Coolidge to the mouth of the Gila river has been assured by the department of agriculture. The survey will be for the proposed \$25,800,000 flood control program for the Gila river below Gillespie dam.

• • •
Survey work preparatory to construction of a gas pipeline from New Mexico to California is underway. The survey crew is working in the area north of Flagstaff, near Black Falls trading post and Wupatki national monument.

CALIFORNIA

California Gila Monster? . . .

BLYTHE—The question of whether or not Gila monsters cross the Colorado river into California was reopened with the reported discovery of one of the poisonous reptiles at the county airport, formerly Blythe army air field. Thomas Bridges and M. G. VanZandt found a small Gila monster, measuring five inches in length, when they were tearing down some of the buildings and raised a board from the ground. They reported there was evidence which indicated that the mother had been at the spot where the small reptile was captured. The alleged Gila monster was exhibited in a jar at the Ripley school by VanZandt's son.—*Palo Verde Valley Times*.

Calico Monument Blocked . . .

BARSTOW—Several hundred mining claims plus titles to much land held privately must be settled before the government can consider making the colorful Calico mountains a national monument, according to Congressman Harry R. Sheppard. The government, Sheppard says, does not feel justified in going to the expense of satisfying the potential claims of these property owners to establish a 4500-acre monument. If, through local interest and activity, the property owners could be eliminated, the government would look with more favor upon releasing its portion of the acreage involved, it was said. The original plan for the monument suggested that the mining claims be left in present hands, as has been done in Death Valley national monument.—*Barstow Printer-Review*.

Ocean Fishing for Salton . . .

NILAND—Anglers of the future will be able to do their deep-sea fishing in the Salton Sea if plans of the division of fish and game mature. Willis A. Evans, biologist of the bureau of fish conservation, reports that only four known species of fish inhabit the sea at present: mullet; the ten-pounder, a relative of the tarpon; desert minnows, and mosquito fish. Before planting some type of ocean fish, a food supply must be made available. Since microscopic life forms known as plankton are present in the Salton, a plankton feeding species of fish was selected for the experiment. Evans and Warden-Pilot Al Reese flew to Guay-

mas and brought back a load of Mexican anchovies which were planted in the Salton. When the forage becomes well-established, some type of game fish will be planted.—*Palm Springs Desert Sun*.

The Desert Shakes . . .

DEATH VALLEY—The quake which rocked the desert regions of Southern California on December 4, brought down at least three landslides visible on the slopes of Tucki mountain, south of Stove Pipe Wells hotel. Each time such a locality gets a good shaking up, it was said, prospectors take to the hills in the hope that veins hitherto hidden may have been uncovered. Down in the Indio-Palm Springs region where the earthquake was most violent, Harry Oliver, who has been campaigning for creation of a desert county, looked worried. "I said I'd split the county," he declared, "but I didn't mean to split it that deep."—*Inyo Independent and The Palm Springs Desert Sun*.

They Crashed in Mono Lake . . .

LEEVINING—When their little cabin plane made a forced landing on Mono lake,

November 24, Mr. and Mrs. Earl Stancliffe, Nadine Johnson and Denney Houhlan spent the night on the floating wreckage with the temperature 14 above zero. Enroute from Hawthorne to Las Vegas, the pilot apparently became lost and cruised until his gas was gone. When they hit the lake, empty gas tanks and the fact that one engine tore loose kept the craft afloat. When water rose in the cabin, the flyers escaped to the top of the plane and made a sail by unfurling a parachute. They were rescued early Thanksgiving morning, while drifting toward the mouth of Rush creek, and were treated at Mono county hospital for shock and exposure.—*Inyo Register*.

Indian Land Title Granted . . .

COACHELLA—Fee title to a 40-acre tract on the northern outskirts of Coachella has been awarded to Alexander James, Coachella Valley Indian. This reportedly makes James the first Indian in 25 years to obtain complete title to Coachella land. Previously, Indian land, allocated in 40-acre parcels to individuals, was held in trust by the government and sale was not allowed. In the Palm Springs area it was said that

status of land-use permits held by 200 to 300 persons on lands of the Agua Caliente Indian reservation may be changed within the next 90 days. Possible changes in permits will come as the land allotments now in the process of being made are passed in trust patent or fee patent from tribal to individual ownership.—*Coachella Desert Barnacle*.

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SNIFF'S BACK YARD

The Show Place of the Coachella Valley

A veritable Garden of Eden

By LOTTA BARRETT

All the blessings of Allah are now ready to be enjoyed in "Sniff's Back Yard"—a restful haven for the traveler. Along the cool aisles under the stately date palms, there's a Fairyland of exotic blooms and trees laden with unusual fruits from far off Spain, China, Brazil, Japan, Jaffa, Palestine—from all the rich desert lands of the entire world.

This season more new and unusual plants have been added, and there is no other spot in the vast Colorado Desert area more interesting and educational than Sniff's Date Garden.

Dr. and Mrs. Sniff have spent many years gathering unusual plants, shrubs and trees from the most remote places on earth and now the reward is great for visitors; the gates to "Sniff's Back Yard" are flung wide open so that all may enjoy the beauty, the fragrance and charm of this interesting place.

One of the most fantastic of the citrus collection is an individual tree which produces nine varieties of fruit. Then there are Tangelos—the result of tangerines and grapefruit being combined; Lemolas—grapefruit and lemons; Limequat—lime and kumquat, and several other delicious combinations.

As breathtaking as the citrus collection are the beautiful roses, trees and bushes, lining the walks.

There are flame vines and red honeysuckles climbing the adobe walls, and night blooming jasmin—unbearably pungent at night—grows in profusion. Orchid and coffee trees add a tropical touch, and bottle-brush and Chinese hat trees are as intriguing as the strawberry tree and rice paper plants.

This desert Garden of Eden is, moreover, a sanctuary for myriads of rainbow hued birds. Song birds

warble their songs from bush and tree and humming birds tirelessly dart from blossom to blossom.

The most wondrous thing in the whole garden is a genuine Arabian tent, of great and lasting beauty of an exacting artistry—an authentic example of intricate needle work. The tent is about fifteen feet across. The basic material is a basket weave of fine canvas, upon which is appliqued thousands of tiny motifs of bright colored cotton material, all mathematically perfect. Fifteen members of one family stitched millions of complicated designs into this fabulous tent, taking five years to complete it.

Down around the corner from the Arabian tent is a small grove of banana trees, towering up twenty feet. Only a few years ago Mrs. Sniff set out a handful of little trees. Now there's a grove, bearing delicious fruit. Verily everything planted in "Sniff's Back Yard" thrives and bears quantities of fruit, just as the Garden of Eden did many ages ago.

The great date grove of majestic palms is in itself a sight to see. The summer and early winter bonnets of heavy paper that have protected the great bunches of delicious, healthful fruit during the growing and ripening period have been torn off and the cream of the crop is now being picked.

The high quality of Sniff's Garden dates has won many ribbons and trophies which are arranged in a handsome display in the sales room. The bountiful date crop of this year is being shipped all over the country, and abroad.

Dr. and Mrs. D. G. Sniff will greet you cordially and show you around their "Back Yard," the most colorful, most interesting place in the whole great American desert area, located 20 miles east of Palm Springs on Highway 111.

ADVERTISEMENT

Randsburg's First Recorder Dies . . .

RANDSBURG—Judge Edward B. Maginnis, 75, a resident of Randsburg for 50 years, died October 30. He was not quite 21 when Burcham, Singleton and Mooers discovered the Yellow Aster mine in 1895, and Maginnis was made the recorder of the newly-organized Rand mining district. The following year he was elected justice of the peace and held the office for many years. —*Inyo Register*.

The first carload of tomatoes out of Sonora shipped on the new shortline railroad from Mexico, arrived at Mexicali De-

ember 11, destined for the Los Angeles market.

One of the first projects of the new wild life club being formed in Coachella valley will be an attempt to stock antelope on uninhabited desert areas such as that near Chuckwalla wells.

Frank Sabathe, 80, one of the early residents of the Twentynine Palms area, died at the Palm Springs hospital in December. Sabathe operated a freight train between San Bernardino and Old Dale in 1896.

Known to old-timers on the desert as the lady who, in her youth, had charge of the mail carrying dog at Calico silver camp, Mrs. Fannie A. Mudget died December 10 in a San Bernardino hospital, aged 74.

NEVADA

Make BMI Payment . . .

LAS VEGAS—During a meeting of the Colorado River commission at Las Vegas, the United States government was handed Nevada's first check for \$79,211.65 to be applied on the purchase of the big Basic Magnesium plant at Henderson, Nevada. The money came from operating revenues obtained by the state from corporations and operators using plant facilities. The price of the plant was set at \$24,000,000, to be paid

out of revenues over a period of 20 years. Governor Pittman, a member of the commission, declared that the power rate for lessees at the plant now is the lowest in the United States—less than 3 mills per kilowatt hour.—*Tonopah Times-Bonanza*.

Base Buildings Sold . . .

TONOPAH—Tonopah hotels and rooming houses were jammed during the sale of 537 buildings auctioned at Tonopah army air base. Bidders came from many states—from California to Florida. All structures on the base were sold with the exception of those awarded to various governmental, state and community agencies and a few retained by the air force. Total price paid for the 537 structures was \$186,282.22. There has been a big influx of workers anticipating a few weeks work wrecking and moving the buildings disposed of at the sale. Except in special circumstances, all structures must be removed from the base within 60 days of purchase. —*Tonopah Times-Bonanza*.

Bighorns at Lake Mead . . .

BOULDER CITY—Lake Mead recreational area has more bighorn or mountain sheep than any other area administered by the national park service in the United States, according to George Bagley, superintendent of the Lake Mead area. The bighorn found in this area is a different species from the one found in the Rocky mountains, and is well adapted to a desert mountain existence. Less than a generation ago, these mountain sheep were very scarce, but protection has allowed them to make a speedy recovery and now they are often seen on the mountains along the shores of Lake Mead—*Goldfield News*.

Mead Test Base Rumored . . .

CARSON CITY—The governor's office has no comment on reports from Las Vegas that the air force planned to build a huge experimental station on the shores of Lake Mead. The Las Vegas stories hinted that the air force planned to move part of its Wright field testing and experimental facilities at Dayton, Ohio, to the Lake Mead area. Air force officials conferred with Governor Pittman in November, then inspected the Lake Mead area, it was said. Earlier reports of a proposed testing base along the Colorado river had come from Arizona.—*Winnemucca Star*.

Clay Dam Rises at Davis . . .

DAVIS DAM—After removing 450,000 cubic yards of undesirable material from the Davis dam foundation lying across the old river channel, the Utah Construction company is replacing it with clay hauled from the borrow pit three miles upstream on the Arizona side. Object of digging the cutoff trench, 200 feet wide and 1000 feet

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Norman Nevills

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—DESERT MAGAZINE

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long, was to remove porous loose material and replace it with compacted clay. This firm, impervious core will rise 200 feet from the lowest point of excavation to the top of the dam and will require approximately 1,200,000 cubic yards of clay. On either side of the clay core, progressively larger material is placed to act as ballast and to provide a protective wear surface. This outer material will require approximately 3,000,000 cubic yards of fill varying in size from dirt to boulders one cubic yard in size.—*Mohave Miner*.

• • •

Forty-Five-Year Shoes . . .

LUNING—On one of his periodical trips to visit a friend at Luning, Jack Stratton of Mina complained mildly that the shoes he was wearing were beginning to break out at the seams, according to W. D. Edds. "At that I guess I haven't much of a kick coming," Jack is reported to have said. "I bought and started wearing those shoes in 1903." Jack is said to have the original box in which the shoes were sold him in the Coeur d' Alene country in Idaho, 45 years ago. Commenting on the story, the *Inyo Independent* said, "It's possible if you sit around the cracker barrel and walk on your hands."—*Tonopah Times-Bonanza*.

• • •

Air Force Will Open Road . . .

TONOPAH—The U. S. air force has agreed to return to public use approximately 216 square miles of Nye county's Tonopah bombing and gunnery range, according to Senator Pat McCarran. Since establishment of the 3,285,511-acre range, the nation's largest, travel over State 25 between Tonopah and Caliente has been halted. Restoration of the proposed area to the public domain will make available a greatly shortened route and open up land for increased mining and livestock activity, it was said. The air force originally planned to take six townships from another point to make up for those given back, but it has been decided that for the present no further ground will be sought for bombing purposes. Surveys will be conducted in the future to seek a single stretch 100 miles long and 50 miles wide within the present range.—*Tonopah Times-Bonanza*.

• • •

River Boatmen Die . . .

DAVIS DAM—Edwin Currie, 34, and Henry Tibbets, 40, both of Barstow, California, vanished on a boat trip from Cottonwood landing, near Searchlight, to Needles. Their boat, turned bottom up, with its front stove in and oars and other equipment missing was found in turbulent, 80-foot-deep water near the auto bridge below Davis dam. After search by friends and law enforcement officials, Currie's body was found December 12, on the Arizona side of the river 2½ miles below Davis dam, but Tibbets' body has not been recovered.—*Barstow Printer-Review*.

• • •

Anyhow, They Rattle . . .

ELY—An argument raging in Ely for several weeks reportedly has been settled by investigation. The question: Do a rattlesnake's rattles lie flat or edgewise in relation to the ground? The verdict: They lie edgewise—that is, perpendicular to the rattle's head.—*Ely Record*.

• • •

Charles Dimmick, who pioneered several areas of the west, died in the Pioche hospital, aged 77. Dimmick, as a cattleman, rode the ranges of Arizona, Nevada and Utah, and figured in one of Zane Grey's best known western novels.

Application of the Southern Pacific to abandon approximately eight miles of railroad from Mina south to Tonopah Junction will be strongly protested by the commissioners of Mineral county and mining men and residents of the area.

NEW MEXICO

Pottery at Taos . . .

TAOS—After long years, pottery-making is being revived at Taos Indian pueblo. Juanita Lucero Gonzales has been hired as an instructor, classes have been organized, and the first pots came out of the baking fire in mid-November. The teacher is a Taos girl who married a San Ildefonso man and learned the craft while living in that pueblo. Maria Martinez, most famous of the San Ildefonso potters, has promised to come to Taos to discuss pottery-making with the class. First move toward the project started last summer when Adam Trujillo, his wife and brother, went to the mountains to bring down some of the heavy Taos clay for the work.—*Taos El Crepusculo*.

• • •

Shalako Ceremonies Held . . .

ZUNI—The six impersonators of the Shalako gods of Zuni went through the final ceremonies of their year-long service to the village early in December without a flaw, giving the people confidence that they would enjoy good fortune and prosperity for the coming year. There were few whites in the watching crowd, but hundreds of Navajo reportedly waited for hours to watch the traditional ceremonies on the sacred field on the south side of the river, which is believed to have been the plaza of the original village of the Zuni tribes several centuries ago. This past year, because of inflationary prices and other economic factors, no new houses were built for the entertainment of the gods but those who volunteered did erect additions to their homes or remodel them with new roofs to have them ready for the gods at Shalako.—*Gallup Independent*.

• • •

Navajo Corporation Planned . . .

GALLUP—Joe McCaskill, general manager for the Indian Arts and Crafts board

of the department of the interior, has presented a plan for the formation of a "Navajo Development corporation" owned by the Navajo tribe. Its purpose would be the development of small industries on the reservation "which can furnish the Indians with hundreds, perhaps thousands of jobs." The proposed corporation could purchase needed looms and equipment and employ a manager for small plants engaged in manufacture of handwoven items. It could go into partnership with existing business firms for operation of industrial plants on the reservation. It could furnish a factory and equipment and contract with an out-

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side company to operate it; and by granting concessions on the use of land, water, etc., encourage outside industries to set up their own plants on the reservation, employing Navajo workers.—*Gallup Independent*.

Traders Pick President . . .

GALLUP—Howard Wilson of Gallup was elected president of the United Indian

Traders association at the annual meeting in December, which brought 75 members from the Southwestern states. Jack Cline of Fruitland was elected first vice-president; Roscoe McGee of Red Mesa, second vice-president, and M. L. Woodard of Gallup, secretary-treasurer. A. H. Lee of Ganado was continued as the traders' representative on the survey board which is conducting a study of trading practices on the Navajo reservation.—*Tucson Citizen*.

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Complete Custodian's Home . . .

AZTEC—A new Spanish design home of stuccoed cement blocks is being constructed for the superintendent of Aztec Ruins national monument. Superintendent Irving Townsend and his family are expected to move into the new home within 30 days. The old custodian's residence, built of adobe, reportedly is unsafe to live in.—*Aztec Independent-Review*.

Inter-Tribal Dates Set . . .

GALLUP—Dates for the four-day Inter-Tribal Indian Ceremonial at Gallup have been set for August 11-14, 1949. The dates were scheduled so as not to conflict with preparations for the Hopi Snake and Flute ceremonies in August. Joe Sekakuku, chief of the Snake fraternity at Shipaulovi on Second Mesa, asked for cooperation explaining: "It is important to the ceremony to have all members of the Snake lodge in the kiva the first four days, for those are the hunting days when they must go out to hunt snakes in each of the four directions. Participation by our members in the ceremonies has been falling off. Many are drawn to Gallup for the Ceremonial when the dates coincide. Others take part with the Ceremonial dance team." Flute ceremonies take place at the same time in the Hopi villages which have not scheduled the biennial Snake dance.—*Gallup Independent*.

To Buy New Mexican . . .

SANTA FE—Robert McKinney, Tucumcari rancher, has been granted an option to purchase the Santa Fe New Mexican, said to be the oldest newspaper in the Southwest. McKinney, who planned to exercise his option January 15, comes from one of the oldest Southwestern families. His grandfather, Robert Moody, was a freighter on the Santa Fe Trail in the '50s and '60s, and was one of the few wagon train operators who kept the trail open during the civil war. Later he was one of the pioneer ranchers of the Sangre de Cristos. Early settlers in New Mexico, the McKinneys fought on both sides of the Lincoln county war. Kip McKinney fought beside Billy the Kid in the famous "Three Day Battle," and Deputy U. S. Marshal John McKinney was with Pat Garrett and John W. Poe the night Billy the Kid was killed at Fort Sumner.—*Santa Fe New Mexican*.

Indian Service to Gallup . . .

GALLUP—The Indian service at Window Rock has petitioned the Gallup town board for use of the old court room for a Gallup business office. The proposed office will be engaged in purchasing, warehousing and finance. The move will bring 32 clerical workers from the reservation headquarters at Window Rock.—*Gallup Independent*.

UTAH

Fast Water Voyages in 1949 . . .

BLUFF—Norman Nevills, champion of the fast river boatmen, has just announced the sailing dates for his 1949 expeditions down the Green, San Juan and Colorado rivers. He plans five boat parties for the 7-day 191-mile trip from Mexican Hat down the San Juan and Colorado rivers to Lees ferry starting May 1, 10, 19, 28 and

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June 6. On June 20 he will pilot a party down the Green River, and on July 12 he will start his sixth annual run through the rapids of Grand Canyon from Lee's ferry to Boulder City.

• • •

May Hike Grazing Fees . . .

SALT LAKE CITY—Question of a hike in grazing fees may come up at the January meeting of the livestock advisory committee in Salt Lake City, according to Marion Clawson, director of the bureau of land management. While the fee was raised from five cents to eight cents a head for cattle two years ago, another rise is not inconceivable in the face of rising costs and the fact that livestock prices are higher, Clawson believes. The bureau, it was said, spent \$1,000,000 during 1948 for soil and moisture improvement in 150,000,000 acres of public range. It reseeded 50,000 acres during the past season, chiefly crested wheat grass, in Idaho, Nevada, Utah and Wyoming.

• • •

Antelope Transplanted . . .

VERNAL—R. L. Turpin, Utah fish and game director, reports the state has been able to move 60 head of antelope from the Daggett county sagebrush to the open rangelands of Iron county. The first drive took place in November when a plane was used to drive 66 animals into the state traps near Linwood. The trapped animals were put into trucks, hauled across the Green river and released in one herd at Iron Springs. Six animals were lost out of the three truckloads, dying from injuries received when they were trapped. The river was too deep for the truck motors to be used, and horses hauled the trucks through the Green. It was found that by covering the trucks so that no light could get in, the antelopes were kept quiet.—*Vernal Express*.

• • •

Concessions Contract Signed . . .

SALT LAKE CITY—After 10 months of negotiations, Utah Parks company, a subsidiary of the Union Pacific Railroad company, has signed a 20-year contract with the department of the interior for concessions

in Zion and Bryce Canyon national parks, Utah, and the north rim of the Grand Canyon, Arizona. Oliver G. Taylor, park service concessions chief, said the new contracts conform with a recently established park service policy calling for eventual government ownership, but private operation of concessions, competitive bidding for expiring contracts and control of profits. The Utah Parks company started operations in Zion in 1923, Grand Canyon in 1927, and Bryce in 1928. The company was said to have more than \$2,500,000 invested in lodges, cabins, restaurants, stores and park transportation systems.—*Salt Lake Tribune*.

• • •

X-Ray at Whiterocks . . .

WHITEROCKS—Tuberculosis, topping a long list of diseases prevalent among the three Ute Indian bands, is at last coming under the scrutiny of medical science. Through the efforts of Dr. John R. Bourne, who directs medical activities at the Ft. Duchesne hospital, a chest X-ray survey



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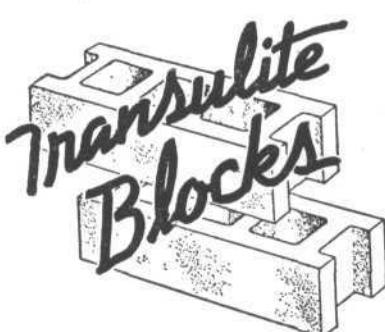
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has been started on the Uintah-Ouray reservation. With the full support of Supt. Forrest Stone, the survey will be under the direction of Dr. Arthur W. Dahlstrom, Indian service medical officer—*Salt Lake Tribune*.

West Needed Geneva . . .

PROVO—The West failed to declare its industrial independence when it let the Geneva steel plant near Provo slip from its grasp, according to the Stanford University



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Law Review. Wartime construction of the plant, the Review says, gave the West the opportunity to develop a mature steel industry of its own, and with it a mature industrial economy. But purchase of the plant by the United States Steel corporation and the more recent acquisition of the Consolidated Steel corporation by U. S. Steel's western subsidiary, Columbia Steel, frustrated that hope.—*Salt Lake Tribune*.

Salt Lake Drops . . .

SALT LAKE CITY—Reflecting the small amount of precipitation in Utah during the summer and fall, Great Salt Lake's water level registered another drop during October and November and now is 4196.15 feet above sea level. The lake, according to M. T. Wilson, district engineer of the U. S. geological survey, maintains a balance between runoff from streams and precipitation on the lake, and evaporation from its surface. In wet seasons, the lake rises. Six or seven wet years could raise the level enough to bring water to the Saltair pavilion again.—*Salt Lake Tribune*.

Geologists See Their Subject . . .

SALT LAKE CITY—Geology students at the University of Utah, traveling by modern air liner, made an aerial survey of the state's three physiographic provinces in October. The one-hour trip afforded the students views of the Wasatch fault in the Wasatch range, the Stockton bar which formed in ancient Lake Bonneville, and the Uintah mountains, said to be the only east-west range on this continent.—*Salt Lake City Tribune*.

Grist Mill Memorial . . .

WEST JORDAN—With more than 200 descendants of the Gardner family attending, the site on which a grist mill was erected 101 years ago by Archie Gardner was marked with a monument in October. Finances for the monument were obtained through the family. Each member was as-

sessed 1 cent for each year of age, and with almost 3000 members, the group gained sufficient funds for erection of the memorial. Four original mill stones from the building were used in constructing the base.—*Salt Lake Tribune*.

Remembers Pioneer Freighting . . .

VERNAL—When C. W. Wardle first hauled freight between Price and Vernal, the 125-mile trip took between 16 and 20 days, "depending on the weather and the luck the freighters had." Wardle made his first freighting trip in 1897, when he was 11 years old, and continued in the business until he drove motor trucks in hours over the routes which had taken weeks. Hauling 7000 to 8500 pounds of freight, the freighters could count on clearing about \$50 per trip between the two towns. "Sometimes it got as cold as 40 degrees below zero," Wardle declared. "The snow would be five or six feet deep and we'd often have to hitch 20 horses to one wagon to open a trail. The driver had to keep walking most of the way to keep from freezing."—*Vernal Express*.

One of the oldest structures in Sevier county, the 70-year-old Redmond opera house, was destroyed by fire in December. The opera house, built in the '80s by Julius Christensen, had been used for the past 40 years as a community recreation center.

The ski tow for Uintah county's new snow sports area in Dry Fork canyon was expected to be ready for use by Christmas, Claudius A. Banks, chairman of the Uintah Snow Sports committee reports.

Sarah Jane Brown, 76, died in Blanding November 13. She grew up with the hardships and privations of pioneer life. She went with her husband to Old Mexico, settling at Colonia Diaz in 1898 and moving to Colonia Dublan in 1902. They came by team back to the States in 1908, when Mexico was in revolutionary turmoil and settled at Blanding—then called Grayson—in 1910. Mrs. Brown was the mother of 14 children, 11 of whom are yet living.

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TRUE OR FALSE ANSWERS

Questions Are on Page 10

- 1—False. An arrastre was used to grind ore.
- 2—False. Great Salt Lake has been gradually receding.
- 3—False. Brigham Young's Mormon colonists reached Utah in July, 1847.
- 4—True. 5—True. 6—True.
- 7—False. The Seven Cities of Cibola were said to be in present New Mexico.
- 8—False. Panamint range is on the west side of Death Valley.
- 9—False. The tarantula bite is hardly as serious as a bee sting.
- 10—True. 11—True. 12—True.
- 13—False. Garnets are found in many colors.
- 14—False. The cliff houses have long since been abandoned by Indians.
- 15—True. 16—True.
- 17—False. White ocotillo is a rarity.
- 18—False. They grow together in northwestern Arizona.
- 19—False. El Tovar is on the south rim of Grand canyon.
- 20—True.

MINES AND MINING . . .

Carson City, Nevada . . .

"Mining operations" are under way in the basement of the Nevada state museum at Carson City. The mine, a project of the museum's board of directors, is equipped for all the different types of mining used in Nevada. Square-set timbering from the Comstock Lode is on display along with a caving operation with timber donated by Consolidated Copper. There is a setup for blasting with fuses sticking out of the ore and a rescue crew standing by with full equipment should anything go wrong. The mine was financed by a \$35,000 donation by Major Max C. Fleischman, while other individuals and concerns donated equipment. The project will be completed within six months, and is planned to give a visitor the feel of real mine conditions without hazards of water, congestion, poor visibility, noises and poor air.—*Winnemucca Star*.

Washington, D. C. . . .

Gold traders are doing a flourishing business around the world, it is reported. In the U. S. and Canada, free gold transactions have gained in volume with prices about \$42 an ounce. Mexico paid \$53 an ounce, Colombia \$54, Chile \$60, Argentina \$58-\$60. In Paris more than \$60 an ounce was paid and prices paid by Moscow buyers reached as high as \$63 an ounce in Europe. Up to \$85 an ounce was paid for gold in Bombay and \$88 in Karachi. In Africa, Cairo led the market with a price of \$72-\$73 an ounce. Gold producers throughout the world reportedly were growing restive at the spread between official and private prices for gold, and Field Marshal Jan Smuts of South Africa is said to have suggested that the United States raise the price of gold. American officials say, however, that a higher price would simply increase the inflationary trend.—*Pioche Record*.

Winnemucca, Nevada . . .

Open pit work at the old Patterson claims in the Leonard creek district, 100 miles northwest of Winnemucca, reportedly is developing a large high grade copper deposit. Ormand Wisby and Norville Clark of Chinault, Oregon, purchased the claims recently from Frank Roberts of Idaho, and their work has disclosed extensive values in copper and silver. Shipments are being made to the American Smelting and Refining company at Garfield, Utah. Mr. and Mrs. Duane Bowman of Oklahoma are developing a copper and silver property two miles from the Patterson claims, with ore shipments anticipated within the next month.—*Humboldt Star*.

Tonopah, Nevada . . .

Frank Warren and A. M. Werner of Tonopah reportedly have discovered small but promising outcrops 75 miles south and west of Tonopah which contain appreciable values in gold and silver and may develop into a uranium discovery. The vein was stripped of overburden for 15 feet and was found to widen to 16 inches. When Warren tested the vein with a Geiger counter, it showed evidence of uranium-bearing minerals, it was said, registering from 40 to 80 clicks. A 10-pound sample was forwarded to the atomic energy commission and in the meantime the partners propose to explore their find on a gold and silver basis.—*Tonopah Times Bonanza*.

Durango, Colorado . . .

The first major oil pool discovered in Colorado since the great Rangely field was tapped at the turn of the century reportedly has been found near Dove Creek in the San Juan basin. The Byrd-Frost-English and Western Natural Gas well, Driscoll No. 1, was brought in near the Utah line in November. The well tested between 750 and 1000 barrels of distillate a day and about 20,000,000 cubic feet of gas daily, according to Col. D. Harold Byrd, head of the company. The well was drilled to 8286 feet in the Mississippian before being plugged back to the Paradox formation, between 5910 and 5934, where it was brought in. It was the first deep test ever drilled in the Dove Creek structure.—*Farmington Times-Hustler*.

Goldfield, Nevada . . .

The Red Hill Florence company, operating a lease on the course of the rich gold vein found by Newmont-Deep Mines at Goldfield, reports 130 tons of ore mined and awaiting acceptance of custom ore by Newmont mill management. At times the ore did not average over 3 inches in width, but some of the narrower streaks yielded values in excess of \$1000 a ton. W. J. Frank, manager, estimated that the ore mined would average over \$50 a ton. The vein, reportedly, is widening while values continue high.—*Tonopah Times-Bonanza*.

Eureka, Nevada . . .

Termination of all pumping operations has been ordered in the Eureka corporation's shaft at Ruby hill, 1½ miles from Eureka. The order, in the form of a telegram from the company's headquarters in Toronto, Canada, explained that increased water flow encountered in November was much greater than the capacity of the plant and was accompanied by mud and disintegrated rock coming from a fissure or fault. Preliminary estimates by George W. Mitchell, general manager indicated, it was said, that a sum probably exceeding \$8,000,000 would be necessary to unwater the mine and open the ore zone. Pumping operations were halted to conserve funds pending studies to determine the best plan of procedure. Work attempting to clear the shaft of water has been under way several years with expenditure of a great amount of money.—*Pioche Record*.

Bonanza, Utah . . .

A revolutionary development in chemical engineering—transportation of gilsonite in a crude oil pipeline and refining the mineral in the same manner as crude oil—will be undertaken by the American Gilsonite company. A plant to render gilsonite soluble will be constructed at Bonanza as soon as concrete can be poured in the spring. The liquid gilsonite will be introduced into the Rangely-Salt Lake pipeline, and will be processed just as if it were oil from one of the Rangely wells. The plant at Bonanza will have an output equivalent to 100-600 barrels a day, and mining will be carried on by the open pit method. Gilsonite, a hydrocarbon, is known only in the Uintah basin and heretofore has been used only for the manufacture of special varnishes, electrical insulation, rotogravure inks and similar items.—*Vernal Express*.

Garfield, Utah . . .

Utah's first electrolytic copper refinery, now under construction south of Garfield, will cost \$16,000,000 and will increase the state's annual pay roll by \$2,500,000, officials of the Kennecott Copper corporation have disclosed. Erection of structural steel will commence about mid-January, with tentative plans calling for completion of the tank house, casting and refinery buildings by October, 1949, and completion of the entire program by March, 1950. Initial capacity will be 12,000 tons of copper per month, cast in the form of wire bars. Utah Construction company has the general contract for the refinery.—*Salt Lake Tribune*.

Ottawa, Canada . . .

Prospectors searching for radioactive ores with a Geiger counter can be fooled by the presence of potassium, according to F. E. Senftle, physicist in the department of mines. One pound of rock containing 5 per cent potassium would emit 4500 gamma rays per minute, Senftle declares, and any gamma ray detector as sensitive as a Geiger counter should be affected by such a radiation source in the field, unless gamma rays from potassium were of very low energy. Potassium is an important constituent of feldspar and is present in many types of crystalline rocks, particularly granite, syenite, granodiorite and pegmatite.—*Salt Lake Tribune*.

Beatty, Nevada . . .

Stoping operations are under way at the old Senator Stewart mine which will furnish ore for the Quinn mill just south of Beatty, with about 15 tons of ore being broken daily. According to plans made by Homer Weeks, operator, production will be increased to 20 tons, which will keep the mill operating 16 hours a day. Work is being conducted on the 170-foot level.—*Beatty Bulletin*.

Walter C. Lawson has been appointed manager of the New Cornelia branch of the Phelps Dodge corporation at Ajo, Arizona. Lawson, first employed by Phelps Dodge as a mining engineer at Ajo in 1926, will replace Ernest Wittenau, retiring after 33 years with the company.

Retirement of D. D. Moffat and J. D. Shilling, top-ranking executives of Kennecott Copper corporation's Utah division, was effective December 31. Both men have been in the mining industry for 50 years and have reached retirement age under the company's plan. Moffat was vice-president and general manager of the Utah division and Shilling was assistant general manager.

A 56-ton car of lead-silver ore shipped by leasers on the Fabbi-Wells property at Lone Mountain, 38 miles north and west of Tonopah, Nevada, returned a total value of well over \$100 a ton. The shipment averaged 20 per cent lead, carried 15 ounces silver and 15 per cent zinc. No payment was made for the zinc.

Plants in the Los Angeles and San Francisco areas are expanding perlite on a commercial scale. Prices of expanded perlite at plants where it is produced range from 18½ cents to 33 1-3 cents per cubic foot in bags. Several sizes are available.

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By LELANDE QUICK, Editor of The Lapidary Journal

We received a letter from a woman in Texas, whose name we withhold for reasons that will become obvious. She writes: "I am enclosing an advertisement which I want your opinion on. I am something less than an amateur, as I know nothing at all about rock cutting. I am a rockhound however and would like to cut my own material. Since I am very busy most of the time and will have very little time for my hobby I hate to put much money into equipment. My husband would like to buy me a set I can work with for Christmas but neither he nor I feel that he can afford \$100 to \$150 for a set when I have no more time than I do. Besides I am going on 49 and have become a nervous wreck from too much worry and responsibility in late years and I might just make a mess of everything. So you see what I am up against. I do have a motor and can get a belt. Will the equipment advertised contain all I need to cut and polish my rocks and make cabochons?"

We offered our correspondent the following advice.

"Indeed I know your problem for people are bewildered when they see a lapidary machine offered for around \$25 and then see another advertisement for apparently the same thing for around \$425. I use the word "apparently" because all is not seen in the ad. The \$25 outfit is good value for the money and be assured you can have a lot of fun with it and turn out some fine cabochons. But then the \$425 outfit is fine and you can turn out many, many things besides cabochons and it will stand up much longer under severe use."

"A glance at your paper will indicate watches for sale for \$2 and others for \$200. All you want to do is tell time with them and about all you get for the other \$198 is much longer life, more beauty, more dependability and certainly greater pride of ownership. You can buy an Austin automobile and tour the United States in it but you can do so in greater comfort, in less time and for much more money in a Packard. I think you see the comparison."

"The thing we have been trying to impress upon people for many years is that gem cutting is not difficult and it is not expensive. One can make it very difficult by attempting artistic work in expensive materials and make it expensive by having an elaborate lapidary shop filled with all the latest labor saving gadgets."

"Take a look at the modern kitchen as portrayed in the magazines. See the electric stoves where you stick the turkey in the oven and go off to the football game. The thing turns on and turns off when the turkey is done; all by itself. In addition to that perhaps the turkey was in the deep freeze unit for three months before it was put in the oven. After the turkey is eaten the dishes are washed automatically in a machine and the bones and refuse are ground to powder and washed down the drain. The pumpkin pie comes out of a can and a box of two-minute pie mix. That costs a lot of money and it is grand, but

you don't need all that to bring a fine Christmas dinner to the table do you?"

"I think it is smart for the beginner with little time and a fancied interest to purchase one of the many low priced lapidary outfits and feel his way. If he likes to make cabochons, wants to do something else and take on more expensive equipment he can always sell his low priced machine to someone else who has become interested by watching him. But he can't sell some home made junk to anyone."

"Therefore we suggest that you send for the little machine, get a book or two on gem cutting, try your hand and feel your way. Indeed there is nothing in all this world for a person going on 49 and a nervous wreck like a few hours at the grinding wheel shaping up the minerals of the earth into things of beauty that will last long after the maker and his machinery are dust."

"For obvious reasons we cannot recommend any equipment for we are doing business daily with all the equipment manufacturers. And so we cannot endorse the machine in the ad you sent. We do know it is a good value and packs a lot of happiness for you. We hope you find a joyful experience in gathering more rocks and in cutting them."

During the years there have been many suggestions here about marking blanks in such a way that perfect cabochons could be cut. We have now hit upon the perfect method. It's a little more trouble perhaps but it assures perfection. There are now on the market several good templates made of plastic materials, some of them transparent so that you can see what you are doing, some of them real precision templates so that you are guaranteed that the stone you cut will fit standard size mountings. Find the spot you want to mark and cover it with transparent decorators' scotch type tape. Salvage a sapphire point from a "permanent" phonograph needle. They are not supposed to be good after a couple of thousand plays. Imbed it in a holder and use it for a pencil. Then mark the design through the template with the needle (you can still see it) and it will cut the tape and mark the stone at the same time. Pull the excess tape away and you will have a marked cabochon shape to which the tape will stick through water, grease and weather. When you have ground the blank to the edge of the tape pull off the tape and there you are. No rubbed out marks to worry about and a perfect blank assured.

Long ago we gave a method of cutting surplus material from slabs by using a pair of tile snippers. There is now on the market a new tool that gives 400 pound pressure with a 20 pound grip. In a few minutes you can trim up a cabochon blank to approximate shape and the tool will pay for itself in a short time because of the grinding wheels you save. The name of the gadget will be supplied to those requesting it if they send a postage stamp for reply.

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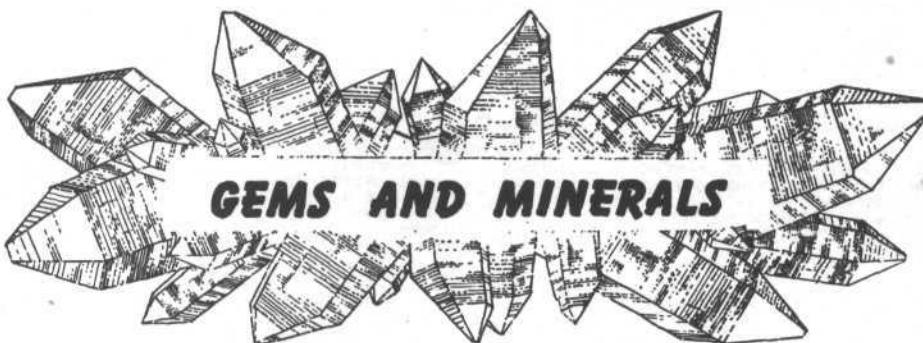
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AMERICAN MINERAL FEDERATION PLANS REVISED CONSTITUTION

Because of vigorous opposition expressed to certain provisions of the articles of incorporation of the American Federation of Mineralogical societies, an emergency rules committee has been appointed to prepare a complete and more acceptable constitution and by-laws before the Sacramento convention of the federation, June 24-26, 1949. Formal incorporation will follow the meeting. Suggestions and recommendations about the constitution or by-laws may be sent to any member of the committee.

Orlin J. Bell, 320 California Street, San Francisco, California, is chairman of the emergency rules committee. Members are: Lloyd L. Roberson, 522 N. 70th Street, Seattle, Washington; Junius J. Hayes, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah; and Oscar Anderson, 422 Nineteenth Street, Bettendorf, Iowa.

• • •

ANNUAL SEARLES '49ER PARTY, JANUARY 29

Searles Lake Gem and Mineral society will hold its annual '49er party, Saturday, January 29, 1949, during the afternoon and evening at the Trona club. Included in plans for the ninth annual affair are games, dancing, music, costumes, prizes, a parade and entertainment. The program was originated in 1941 by Ann and George Pipkin.

Officers of the mineral society were to be installed at the December 15 meeting of the group. John Pillott is the new president; B. Bostrom, vice-president; Mrs. Betty Grau, secretary; Eddie Redenbach, treasurer. New directors are Bob Carter, Clark Mills, Ralph Merrill and Mrs. Nellie Merritt. Meetings of the club are held the third Wednesday of each month at the Trona club at 8 p. m.

• • •

PROPOSE NAME CHANGE FOR CALIFORNIA FEDERATION

The Hollywood Lapidary society and the Gem Cutters' Guild of Los Angeles were admitted to the California Federation of Mineralogical societies at a directors' meeting held November 14 at Bakersfield. The federation now has 43 members. It was moved and carried that a proposal to change the name of the organization to the California-Nevada Federation of Mineral and Gem societies be submitted to member societies.

The educational committee of the federation wishes to start a collection of 35 mm colored slides of minerals and gems to be made available to federation members, schools, and wherever it will serve to promote interest and knowledge in the mineral sciences. Ralph Dietz, chairman of the committee, has asked each of the member societies to support the project and form a committee of those interested.

BLYTHE WILL SPONSOR DESERT GEM SHOW

Desert Gem and Mineral society of Blythe will sponsor this year's Desert Gem show, to be held at Blythe, March 4-6. Blythe, Indio, and probably the Banning societies will participate, and all amateurs are invited to exhibit at the show. Field trips are planned, those tentatively scheduled being one to the Arizona quartz crystal fields Saturday, March 5, and one to the Houser geode beds March 6. At the last show held in Blythe, 750 visitors registered and more than 250 made the trip to the Houser beds. More than 2000 visitors attended last year's Desert Gem show at Indio, sponsored by the Coachella Valley society.

The executive board of the Blythe society is working out further plans at present. Mrs. Collis Mayflower is acting president. Others active in formulating the plans are Dale Breman, Lyle Addison, Mrs. Emmy Lou Coronas and Glenn Vargas.

Those interested in a new mineral club being organized in San Antonio, Texas, may contact Mrs. Lela S. Karwiel, 723 Steves Avenue, San Antonio.

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RARE MINERAL of "Gehlenite." Takes fine polish, 5 lbs. postpaid, \$1.50. Much cheaper in lots. A. J. Evans, 212 E. Hemlock St., Deming, New Mexico.

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THE DESERT MAGAZINE

AMONG THE ROCK HUNTERS

The annual Christmas party of the Santa Monica Gemological society was enjoyed December 1 by members and guests. Interesting games and contests, based on minerals, were prepared by Mrs. Clarence Chittenden. Refreshments and exchange of gifts rounded out the festivities. December field trip was to the area south of Ridgecrest with the NOTS of Inyokern.

A lapidary symposium on cutting and polishing of gems was to feature the December 3 meeting of the Colorado Mineral society of Denver. Ress Philips was to discuss equipment; Chester R. Howard, cabochons, and Guy B. Ellermeier, faceting. All members were invited to participate. At the November meeting, Carroll H. Wagemann, geologist, gave a talk on the origin of the scenery as shown in Rocky Mountain national park, illustrated with color slides.

Dr. George Schwartz, professor of geology at the University of Minnesota, was to be principal speaker at the December meeting of the Minnesota Mineral club of Minneapolis. His topic was "Copper Minerals." Two films, one showing the artificial production of crystals and the other the production of sulphur in Texas and Louisiana, were shown at the November meeting of the society. After the pictures W. J. Bingham spoke on the equipment needed for cutting and polishing stone, and how to use it.

A top program was enjoyed by members of the Chicago Rocks and Minerals society, 2650 W. Peterson Avenue, at the December 11 meeting. R. C. L. atomic blinker survey meters containing Geiger counters were clacking away in the invisible radioactive waves from rocks containing uranium, thorium, carnotite, carnotite wood and pitchblende. Rockhounds who had collected in Utah and Arizona brought in the specimens. Lloyd G. Shore was guest speaker and demonstrator for the evening, and the Radiation Counter Laboratories, Inc., of Chicago, furnished the survey meters. The annual auction of the society was held November 13. During the recess Stevens T. Norvell entertained the members and guests with color kodachrome slides.

Dr. J. G. Lester, chairman of the geology department of Emory university, was the featured speaker at the November meeting of the Georgia Mineral society held in Atlanta. His subject was "Uranium Minerals, How and Where to Find Them," and a demonstration of the Geiger counter was included.

The Feather River Gem and Mineral society of Oroville, California, has issued the first number of its new bulletin, *Feather River Reflections*. In the bulletin the new society meeting place, Dunstone memorial hall, Wyandotte, was announced. December 16 meeting was to be a Christmas party potluck, with a swap-sell-buy-or-giveaway session following, and the annual election of officers. The first November meeting was largely taken up with a discussion of lapidary practice. At the second November meeting, Lee and Cooky Reeves showed kodachromes of their recent four-day trip to Gerlach, Nevada, and vicinity.

YUMA GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY ORGANIZED

Yuma Gem and Mineral society was organized December 2, 1948. V. N. Yager, Box 1265, Yuma, Arizona, is acting chairman of the new group and Mrs. Leah B. Robinson, 845 Third Avenue, Yuma, is secretary. Officers were to be elected at the December 15 meeting and tentative plans for programs, field trips, and affiliation with the California federation discussed. All gem and mineral enthusiasts were invited to join the new group.

Vincent Evans of Reedley college talked on his travels to South America, and Peru in particular, at the November meeting of the Sequoia Mineral society. His talk was illustrated with colored slides. A. Alexander of the federal bureau of reclamation was to lecture at the December 7 meeting at Parlier union high school on the irrigation projects of the San Joaquin valley.

George W. Chambers, who operates the Desert Rats Nest at Encinitas, reports that in a parcel of zircons mined in Australia he found a terminated zircon which he believes one of the largest and most perfect in the world, both as to weight and crystalline shape. The crystal weighs three pounds, eight and three-quarters ounces. Three of the crystal faces are 2 1/4 inches long, the fourth 3 1/4 inches long.

A hobby show was held in Barstow, California, November 21, under the auspices of the Mojave Desert Gem and Mineral society. The show included any sort of hobby from baby dolls to model railroads. There were 64 exhibits, and 557 visitors registered at the show. Ernest J. McMichael is president of the Mojave club.

December meeting of the San Fernando Valley Mineral and Gem society of Sepulveda was a Christmas party and program including songs and recitations. John and Johnnie Anderson furnished music with their electric guitars; the Craig family acted out a skit portraying a night on a field trip; Johnnie Mitchell, Mary Newbold, Mr. Liljibald, and Master Johnnie Dwyer sang, and Master Hal Dwyer recited "What Are Rockhounds?" After the program Santa Claus arrived with presents. Mrs. H. Stamp was hostess. Field trip for December was planned to the Yermo area.

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Robert Dott, director of the Oklahoma state geological survey, gave an illustrated talk on the industrial minerals of Oklahoma at the December meeting of the Oklahoma Mineral and Gem society of Oklahoma City. Oil, asphalt sand, glass sand, calcite and selenite were among the minerals mentioned.

At the December meeting of the Mineralogical Society of Utah, C. W. Lockerbie was to discuss his representative agate collections from five western Utah fields. Field trip for the month was to be for clear gypsum crystals.

S. L. Wolfson was chosen president of the Tucson Gem and Mineral society at the December meeting in the state museum. Mrs. A. H. Murchison was elected vice-president, and Mrs. Don Graham, secretary-treasurer. O. R. Watwood is the retiring president.

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Gene Linville of Hollywood spoke on "Gems" at the December meeting of the Pomona Valley Mineral club, held in the chemistry building of Pomona college. According to Linville, 35-40 of the 3000 known minerals can be classed as gems. He concluded his lecture by answering questions club members asked. He displayed a beautiful emerald crystal in matrix.

Yachats Gem and Mineral club of Oregon has elected Alice Hyder, president; Peggy Bamber, vice-president; Harvey Cole, treasurer, and Fritze Cole, Box 150, Yachats, Oregon, secretary. Storms have opened up the beaches, it was reported, and hunting is good along the coast. Members would like to trade sagenite and other beach material for rocks from other districts.

Dr. Dan Spaulding of Coin, Iowa, who was stationed in Burma during the war, told the November meeting of the Nebraska Mineralogy and Gem club of Omaha about his visits to the ruby mines there and the methods used to cut and polish the stones. Club members showed colored slides and movies taken on earlier picnics and field trips. Dr. E. S. Bantin was to talk on fluorescence at the January meeting at Joslyn memorial in Omaha.

Dr. Carl Beck, geology professor at the University of New Mexico, spoke on "Crystallography" at the November meeting of the Albuquerque Gem and Mineral club, using models of the six different crystal systems to illustrate his talk. It was decided at the last meeting to have a series of short talks prepared by club members on subjects pertaining to geology, mining, mineralogy and the lapidary arts.

When and if roaming rockhounds reach El Paso, Texas, the El Paso Mineral and Gem society invites them to contact any of the following members of the society to "talk rocks": R. H. Miller, Ascarate Park; Chas. J. Hutchinson, 303 San Francisco; J. W. Redding, 177 Anita Circle. Meetings of the group are held the second and fourth Wednesdays and field trips usually are taken on the second Sunday of each month.

Myor Wolfson spoke on the "Lost Wax Method" of making silver castings at the November meeting of the Hollywood Lapidary society. Mr. Tracy from the Birmingham hospital gave a short talk about the work being done for the veterans. Profit from the recent show held by the society, \$194.11, is to be set aside as a show fund. Approximately 50 cars and 150 persons made the field trip to Nuevo on November 21 where asterated quartz was obtained from the dump. Twenty-two made the Mule canyon field trip and good material was obtained, some of which was polished and on display at the November meeting.

O. C. Smith, superintendent of petroleum refineries, Bell, California, was to speak on the simplicity of most of the tests necessary to identify the common minerals at the December meeting of the San Diego Mineral and Gem society. The Christmas party of the society was planned for December 10 at the E. P. C. A. hall, with each person attending bringing a gift. December 5, the Gem and Lapidary division planned a field trip for star quartz east of Jacumba. December 19, the Mineralogy division planned a field trip to the Ashley gem mine at Pala and the Mineral Resources division scheduled a field trip to the garnet mine near Descanso.

YAVAPAI SOCIETY STAGES SECOND ANNUAL SHOW

The second annual gem and mineral show of the Yavapai Gem and Mineral society attracted more than 300 people to the display room of the Arizona Power corporation, Prescott, November 27-28. Twenty new members were admitted into the society as a result of the show. In addition there were visitors from Canada, California, New Mexico, Kansas, Michigan, Ohio, Montana, Colorado, Illinois, South Dakota and Iowa.

Judges for the exhibits were Fred Schemmer, president of the Northern Arizona Fair association, and Dr. C. A. Anderson and Dr. Ralph S. Cannon, both of the U. S. geological survey. Award winners were: Minerals—Chip Murdock, first; Mr. and Mrs. Al Potter, second; John Butcher, third. Gems—John Butcher, first; Victor R. Kiessling, second; Robert de Angelis, third. Slabs and polished material—Ernest E. Michael; John Butcher, second; Pete Murdock, third. Thumbnails and micro-mounts—Mrs. E. E. Michael, first; Pete Murdock, second; Alvin A. Hanson, third. Fossils—Chip Murdock, first; Alvin A. Hanson, second; Harold Butcher, third. Vice-President E. E. Michael also exhibited a collection of gem stones non-competitively.

Dr. Harvey H. Nininger of the American Meteorite museum near Winslow, lectured at the December 7 meeting of the Yavapai society on "Stones from the Skies." In his lecture, Dr. Nininger advocated the widespread study of meteorites, not only so that more would be found but because it would be discovered how interesting they are in themselves. Club President Harold Butcher announced that the club will meet on the first Wednesday of each month in the music room of the Prescott junior high school.

The Northern California Mineral Society, Inc., planned its annual election of officers at the December 15 meeting at the San Francisco public library. December 12, members of the society were to make a field trip to Petaluma to see the collection of Max Vonsen, said to be the largest and finest private mineral collection in California. Annual Christmas tree party of the group was to be held December 11 at the society headquarters, 1001 Oak Street.

The Clark County Gem Collectors of Southern Nevada held their Christmas pot-luck supper at the Parks museum, December 19, with about 50 persons present. There was an exchange of gifts and a grab bag of stones, both rough and polished. A social meeting was held after the supper. Anna Parks was hostess for the program. The society, which consists of more than 60 members, is making field trips every Sunday, weather permitting. One of the most interesting of the year was by boats down the Colorado river to collecting areas almost impossible to reach by any other method.

November meeting of the Kern County Mineral society, in conjunction with the Kern Historical society, was addressed by Dr. H. H. Nininger, director of the American Meteorite Museum near Winslow, Arizona, who lectured on meteorites and displayed some of his personal collection. The field trip of the month was a trading expedition to Porterville where members of the group bartered with the Sequoia Mineral society. Plans are being formulated to make the trading trip an annual event, and possibly arrange similar events with the Mojave and Trona groups.

REPORT AMETHYST FIND NEAR BOULEVARD, CALIFORNIA

When William Axemaker of Boulevard, California, went hunting a few weeks ago, he found an outcropping of purple rock, according to Guy O. Glazier. Being a rockhound and gem cutter, he brought home samples. One piece, faceted by an Oregon gem cutter is classified as an eight carat amethyst valued at \$20 a carat. Axemaker already has filed on the outcrop which is identified only as being "not many miles from Boulevard."

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William R. Harriman, well known in the field of gold mining, gave an informal and humorous account of the gold discoveries in California at the November meeting of the Delvers Gem and Mineral society of Downey. Field trip of the month was to the jasper fields near Ludlow, California.

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Richard Liddicoat, assistant director of the Gemological Institute of America, outlined the history of the manufacture of synthetic gems at the November meeting of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California. The speaker showed slides of synthetic gems. Mr. Rodekohr and Mr. Vance gave a resume of their recent trip to New Mexico. With the aid of a steam shovel, they were able to uncover some nice smithsonite buried in the dump at the Kelly mine. Bill Sanborn, national park ranger naturalist, was to be the speaker at the December meeting of the society, discussing "Exploring Yellowstone's Fossil Forests." All communications to the society should be addressed to Mrs. Victor J. Robbins, 928 E. Hellman Avenue, Monterey Park, California.

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Wanda Strange, sixth grade, was elected president of the Ajo Rockhounds, elementary grade school club sponsored by Mrs. Thelma Stokes at Ajo, Arizona. Other officers are: Philip Johannes, sixth grade, vice-president; Nancy Powell, seventh grade, secretary; Norman Godfrey, eighth grade, treasurer, and Gloria Gray, sergeant at arms. The group is making plans for a field trip soon, for specimens of chalcedony to be gathered for the fluorescent display.

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Dona Ana County Rockhound club of New Mexico was to sponsor a public lecture by Chas. J. Hutchinson, January 7, at the Branigan public library in Las Cruces. Hutchinson will lecture on his experiences in the Yukon at the turn of the century, illustrated with hand colored lantern slides made from photographs taken at the time. Regular meeting was scheduled for January 21 at the J. T. Kilgore residence in Fillmore, with an election of officers planned. January field trip was planned to Orogrande.

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Tentative plans of the State Mineral Society of Texas call for a rock show in San Antonio, April 23-24, at the Plaza hotel with the exhibit space occupying the whole roof garden. There will be a charge for those who plan to sell material, but no fee for those exhibiting. All members were urged to plan an individual display.

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Raymond L. Rock, 322 Arlington Court, is president of the recently formed San Antonio Rock and Lapidary society of Texas. R. B. Perry is vice-president and Lela S. Karwiel, 723 Steves, is secretary-treasurer. The society reportedly has 33 paid up members, and will meet the second Monday of every month at 8 p. m. at the downtown division of Trinity university on Crockett Street.

SAN JOSE LAPIDARY SHOW PLANS OUTLINED

Variety and beauty of gem stones will be featured at the fourth annual gem show of the San Jose Lapidary society, at the San Jose Womens club auditorium, 75 S. Eleventh Street, April 23-24. The society has completed its own show cases and will present a more elaborate show than in previous years. For months the 75 members of the society have been transforming rough material from almost every important gem locality in the world into gem stones and jewelry.

Approximately 10,000 pieces, representing more than 100 varieties of material will be shown as spheres, flats, cabochon cuts and faceted stones. Novelties such as lamp bases, book ends, ash trays and pen trays will be displayed and the transparencies which received so much favorable comment at the last show will be exhibited on a frame which is seven feet high and 16 feet long. None of the exhibits will be for sale. Admission will be free and the show will be open from 10 a. m. to 9 p. m.

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Gem Stone Collectors of Utah have elected Kenneth O. Stewart president for 1949. Mrs. Geraldine Hamilton is vice-president; Grant Steele, secretary, and Mose Whitaker, treasurer. The annual competitive display of cut and polished stones was held at the December meeting with grand prize awarded to B. D. Bennion. First awards, in six classes, went to: H. Hardy, Bingham, cabochons; C. L. Pettit, Woods Cross, facet stones; T. Frank Nelson, Salt Lake City, jewelry; K. O. Stewart, Utah stones; and B. D. Bennion, slab stones and ornaments.

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The Imperial Lapidary guild and the Imperial Valley Gem and Mineral society are making plans for their spring show, but no dates have been set as yet. Six Guild members are doing silver work to set the stones they have been polishing. Mr. and Mrs. N. Pratt, Leo DeCelles and his son, Bobby, and Mr. and Mrs. L. G. Beale made a three-day trip into the Black Hills of Imperial county after rocks, and were joined by George Moore and Leon Miller. Carnelian, opalite and sagenite agate were collected.

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The San Gorgonio Mineral and Gem society of Banning entertained members and guests with a Christmas party December 15 in the Legion hall. Society officers elected for 1949 are: Dr. Niles J. Reeves, president; O. G. Wellborn, vice-president; Vera Lockwood, secretary-treasurer; George Eustice and Al Showman, directors. Al Showman will continue to edit the society bulletin, *Rock-Bits*, and handle publicity. Societies wishing to exchange bulletins should address Al Showman, Box 357, Banning, California.

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New officers for the Eugene Mineral association of Eugene, Oregon, were elected at the December 1 meeting at Condon Hall. Roger C. Bale is the new president; M. G. Woodward, vice-president; Helen Erickson, secretary-treasurer; L. H. Kerlee, custodian-librarian, and F. R. McCabe and Dan E. Cole, board of trustees. George Barton, with the help of F. W. Robinson, demonstrated the use of the Geiger counters at the meeting. Mrs. Roger C. Bale, 2099 Riverview Street, Eugene, Oregon, is the publicity director for the club.

LONG BEACH SOCIETY VOTES NAME CHANGE

At the November meeting of the Long Beach Mineralogical society the first reading and passing of the proposal to change the club name to Long Beach Mineral and Gem society were made. Second reading and voting on the proposition were to be a part of the business of the December meeting. Installation of officers was to take place at the December gathering, and presentation of gifts to the out-going officers. Another feature of the potluck night meeting was to be distribution of high grade minerals, crystals and rocks to members who had paid their dues.

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The Pacific Mineral society held its annual Christmas dinner party at the Eleda cafe, Los Angeles, December 8. Entertainment of the evening included Christmas carols sung by Clara Louise Underwood, accompanied by Irene Kecura at the piano. Mrs. John A. Jones showed colored slides which she had taken of the Pacific Mineral society's field trips for 1948. Dr. P. A. Foster displayed crystals which had been used in the study of crystallography.

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January 3 meeting of the Los Angeles Lapidary society will have Mr. Forbes of the Carborundum company as its principal speaker. Ted Schroeder is president of the Los Angeles group. Anyone interested is always welcome at the meetings of the society, held the first Monday of each month at Griffith playground, Los Feliz and Riverside Drive, Los Angeles.

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By RANDALL HENDERSON

ON NEW Year's eve I was one of the 300 trekkers who sat around a campfire on the floor of California's Borrego desert and listened to the tall tales of the old-timers who had come to take part in the annual Liar's contest.

A hundred feet from the log fire was the Pegleg monument—a pile of granite boulders that grows year by year as lost treasure hunters come to this region to search for the nuggets of black gold said to be exposed on the top of Pegleg Smith's legendary three hills. According to tradition each gold hunter must deposit ten rocks on the monument before starting his quest. It is a tribute to the god of good fortune.

It was quite fitting that the master of ceremonies for the evening should be Harry Oliver whose quarterly magazine, *Desert Rat Scrapbook*, is famed for its desert mythology. When the visitors had found their seats on the sand Harry mounted a stump and summoned the contestants to enter the ring and spin their yarns.

There were many of them. I lost count somewhere in the 20's. There were professionals and amateurs, and they told some amazing stories. But we all knew who the winner would be long before the party broke up.

You would expect the champion in this kind of a contest to be a blustering extrovert with a gift o' gab. Actually the winner was a soft-spoken little old man with a scraggly beard—a poet.

Half way through the program he stumped into the circle on a pegleg and told his story in verse—in a voice that might well have come from the grave. I don't suppose Hollywood has ever heard of Roy Hicks—but his lines and his impersonation of a reincarnated Pegleg Smith for the few moments he stood out there by that blazing log fire was something out of this world—as they were intended to be. Hollywood seldom produces such artistry as the campers around the fire witnessed that evening. Here are the closing lines of the poem, which Roy Hicks had written himself—

*Tonight I have come from the grave's narrow cell.
But your fate and your fortunes I may not foretell,
Or, who in the search for my gold shall excel—
My gold that was black as the cinders of hell.
Enmeshed and enthralled by its magical spell,
Ye here on the desert forever shall dwell.
Its curse I bequeath ye, forever, farewell.
Black gold of the desert—
Truth, legend or myth?
Ah, that is my secret,
Me! Old Pegleg Smith.*

And then he stumped out of the circle on his wooden leg. Actually, Roy Hicks has two good legs, but he did a superb job of making up as a pegleg. In his youth Roy

followed the prospector's trail. But his home is now in Costa Mesa, California. They produce great poets at Costa Mesa, for that little seaside community also is the home of Nell Murbarger whose beautiful verses often appear in *Desert*.

Generally the poets have to be content in the role of unsung heroes. They do not get many breaks. I get out of patience with them myself sometimes when the mail bag bulges with their good, bad and indifferent verse. But despite all that, I love the whole tribe of them. And it gave me a great thrill when a mild-mannered old veteran—a dark horse entry and a poet—hobbled into the ring and made all the desert's big bad liars look like a bunch of amateurs.

The Great Artist who paints the ever-changing colors on the desert landscape gave us a rare picture this year. Entering Borrego valley through the great forest of ocotillo which spreads out at the base of the San Ysidro and Vallecito mountains, the roadside was vivid with the coloring of the Midwest in autumn.

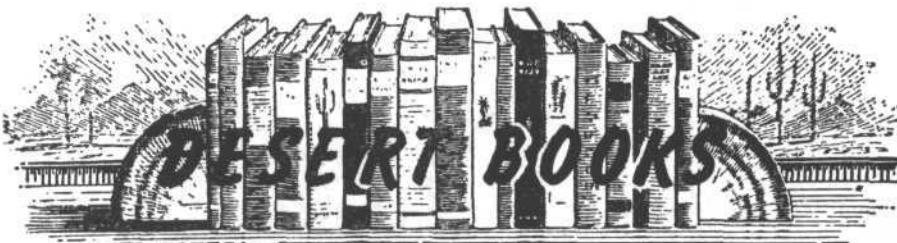
It was the color of ocotillo—not the scarlet plumes of the blossom, but of ocotillo leaves. Their colors ranged from bronze to bright yellow, and from deep maroon to pink, with an occasional staff of green.

It requires an unusual combination of weather changes to create this picture. The ocotillo puts on leaves only after a substantial rain. It may wait months or even years—but there must be water in the ground to bring out the leaves. They remain only as long as the earth at their roots is damp.

This year the rain came in October, and then in December while the stalks still wore their shaggy coats of green leaves a frost came—and the New Year's color display was the result. It may not happen again for 20 years.

Like most of the others at the campfire, I rolled my sleeping bag on the floor of the desert after the party was ended. All around my bed were tiny green sprouts of desert wildflowers just coming through the ground—lupine, desert lily, verbena, primrose. There is the promise of a glorious wildflower display on the Colorado desert this season, and it will come early. Already verbena and lily are in blossom in sheltered areas.

I can think of no better place to start the New Year than to awaken on January 1 in a garden of wildflowers, with a warm desert sun coming over the distant horizon. What vigor and beauty and promise there is in such an environment. I awakened with the lines of Ol' Pegleg the poet running through my mind, and I was glad that I am one of those fortunate folks who, "Enmeshed and enthralled by its magical spell, ye here on the desert forever shall dwell."



WHEN THE CERRO GORDO HELPED BUILD LOS ANGELES

Remi A. Nadeau has the proper family background for writing *CITY-MAKERS*, the story of the men who built Los Angeles from a pueblo to a city in the great boom starting in 1868. He is a descendant of Remi Nadeau, leading Southern California freighter in the 1870s, who also built the first four-story building in Los Angeles. It is not surprising, then, that the author's especial interest centers on transportation, and the most valuable parts of the new book deal with the development of roads, wagon routes and railroads.

Of particular interest to desert people are the chapters on the great silver mining camps of Cerro Gordo, in the Inyo mountains, and Panamint, near Death Valley. Panamint has been dealt with before and in greater detail by other writers, but *CITY-MAKERS* contains the most complete account of Cerro Gordo in print.

Nadeau tells of the discovery of the "fat hill" by Mexican prospectors in 1865, and of the 1867 rush when ore worth less than \$200 a ton was thrown away as worthless. He describes the first road to the camp built by M. W. Belshaw to permit hauling of heavy equipment for the smelter he and his partners were erecting, a road "so winding that Cerro Gordans joked of having to be drunk to drive it."

He tells of great pack trains of burros loaded with ore for the smelter, bringing down charcoal, hauling water for the camp. He goes into details of Nadeau's freighting network to take the lead-silver ingots to Los Angeles and bring supplies back. In 1873 there were 80 teams constantly on the road, and supplying the Cerro Gordo was Los Angeles' chief business enterprise. Travelers of today can hardly imagine that nerve-straining trek. The wagon wheels had to be chained and double-braking systems used to get the loaded wagons down from the mountains, and as many as 28 mules were used to haul them through the hub-deep sands of Red Rock canyon.

There are stories of the battle for the control of Cerro Gordo's mines, smelters and roads; of the ore steamer on Owen's lake; of times when bars of lead-silver bullion piled so high at Cartago and Swansea that miners built huts of them. Other fascinating sections deal with the bandit Vasquez's reign of terror and capture; the Southern Pacific railroad and the battle for Cajon pass; the railroad conquest of the Tehachapi. Prominent among the "city-makers" told about are John Downey, Robert Widney, Francis Temple, Phineas Banning, Benjamin Wilson, Mortimer Belshaw and Harvey O'Melveny.

CITY-MAKERS is well written, a book rich in source materials and facts which hitherto have been obtainable only from the yellowing files of early newspapers. It is valuable to anyone interested in Southern California history.

Doubleday & Co., Garden City, New York, 1948. 270 pps., index, bibliography, map end papers. \$3.50.

THE ANCIENTS LIVED IN HIDDEN FRIJOLES CANYON

The Keres-speaking Indians of New Mexico have a legend that long ago a treaty was made between their ancestors and the Tewa-speaking people, roughly defining the territory which was to belong to each group. The spot where the treaty was completed was called *Tyuonyi*, meaning "place of treaty," which we know today as Frijoles canyon. J. W. Hendron has given a simple, readable account of the history of that spot in *FRIJOLES: A HIDDEN VALLEY IN THE NEW WORLD*.

Hendron has spent most of his life in New Mexico and has done much archeological work in the Bandelier national monument, under the general direction of the national park service. Some years ago he wrote a semi-technical account on the archeology of Frijoles. But the present work, according to the author, is meant for the lay reader who visits Bandelier monument and who would like to understand some of the customs and ways of life of its ancient inhabitants. He has made the book "a combination of legendary material, observation, speculation, scientific fact and logic."

The lands south of Frijoles canyon supposedly were Keres, those to the north Tewa. But both groups occupied the canyon, possibly together at some period. Eventually the Keres moved or were driven out. Then the Tewas built their stone pueblos of the "great period." In a little more than 100 years, Frijoles canyon Indians cut more than 300 cave rooms in the soft rock of the north cliff of the valley. As many houses as caves were built—some of them three stories high, leaning against the cliff with the great roof beams set into the cliff at one end. The houses extended out as far as four rows of rooms from the cliff, and were terraced up with brush ramadas on the roofs. Long House has rooms built side by side along the cliff front for over 700 feet.

Pueblos were constructed in the open valley during some period. *Puwige*, "pueblo where the women scraped the bottoms of

the pottery vessels clean," was built beside the little *rito*, and contained 400 rooms. In its final form, it was a continuous ring about an open court, with only a narrow, easily-blocked passage to the outside valley.

Frijoles was occupied for about 600 years, then abandoned, Hendron believes. There are ruins enough to have housed 2000 primitive Indians, but it seems that no more than a few hundred ever lived there at any one time. The valley probably was abandoned during a period of great drouth. By the end of the 16th century all the great towns of the Pajarito plateau were empty.

The value of *FRIJOLES: HIDDEN VALLEY OF THE NEW WORLD*, lies in the simplicity with which the author has outlined the Indian history of the region, and the clarity with which he has recreated the life of its ancient inhabitants. Excellent photographs, and sketches by Jocelyn Taylor add to the book's value. The story was edited by Dorothy Thomas.

Rydal Press, Santa Fe, 1946. 91 pps., maps, plans, bibliography, glossary, index. \$2.75.

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In celebration of California's centennials, the University of California Press is publishing the *Chronicles of California* series. The books are planned to cover the events and phases in the state's past which most influenced the development of California, with three titles announced to date. "Gold Is the Cornerstone," by John Walton Caughey, describes the gold rush, routes to the mines, life in the camps and the effects of gold on California. "California Pictorial," by Jeanne Van Nostrand and Edith Coulter, tells the story of the state from 1786 to 1859 by means of contemporary paintings and drawings, most of them published for the first time. "Land in California," by W. W. Robinson, traces the story of land ownership in California from Indian days to the present.

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Many good photographs of the Mother Lode country, the old Spanish missions and coast points of interest are to be found in "California Landmarks," by Jim McClure, published by Stanford University Press. But the subtitle, "A photographic guide to the state's historic spots," is too ambitious. With the exception of a few shots of Bodie and Aurora, the vast array of historical ruins which dot the desert area are totally ignored. Readers who did not know the facts would be left with the impression that no California history was made east of the Sierras. 149 pps., \$3.00, maps and keys.

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